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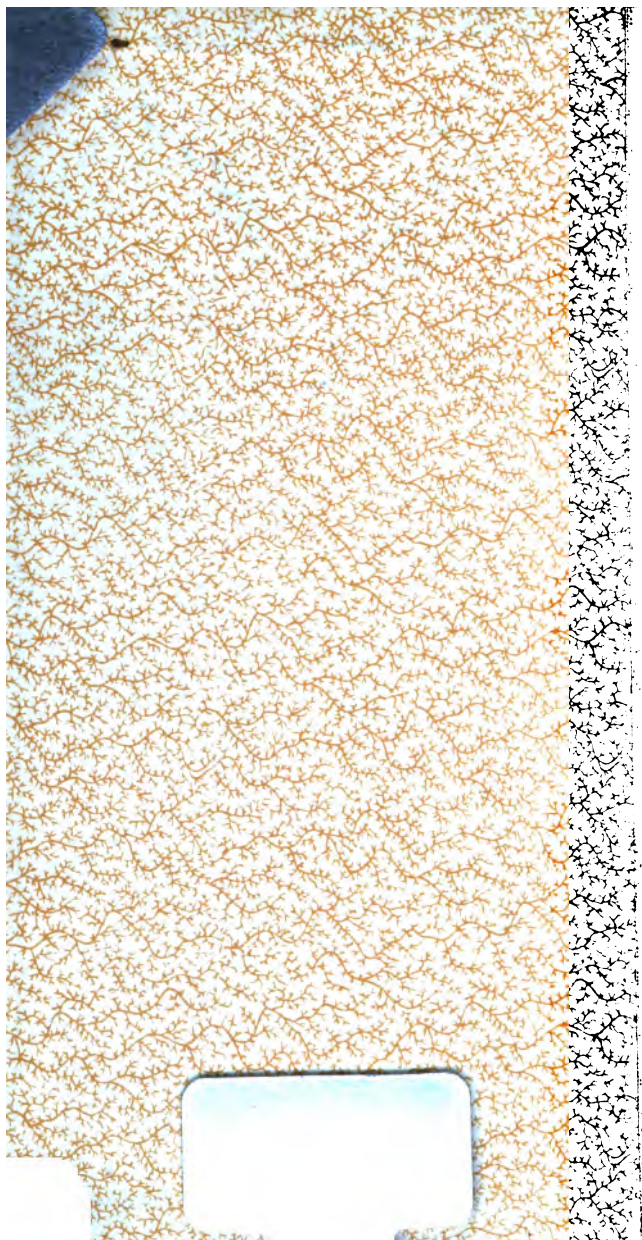
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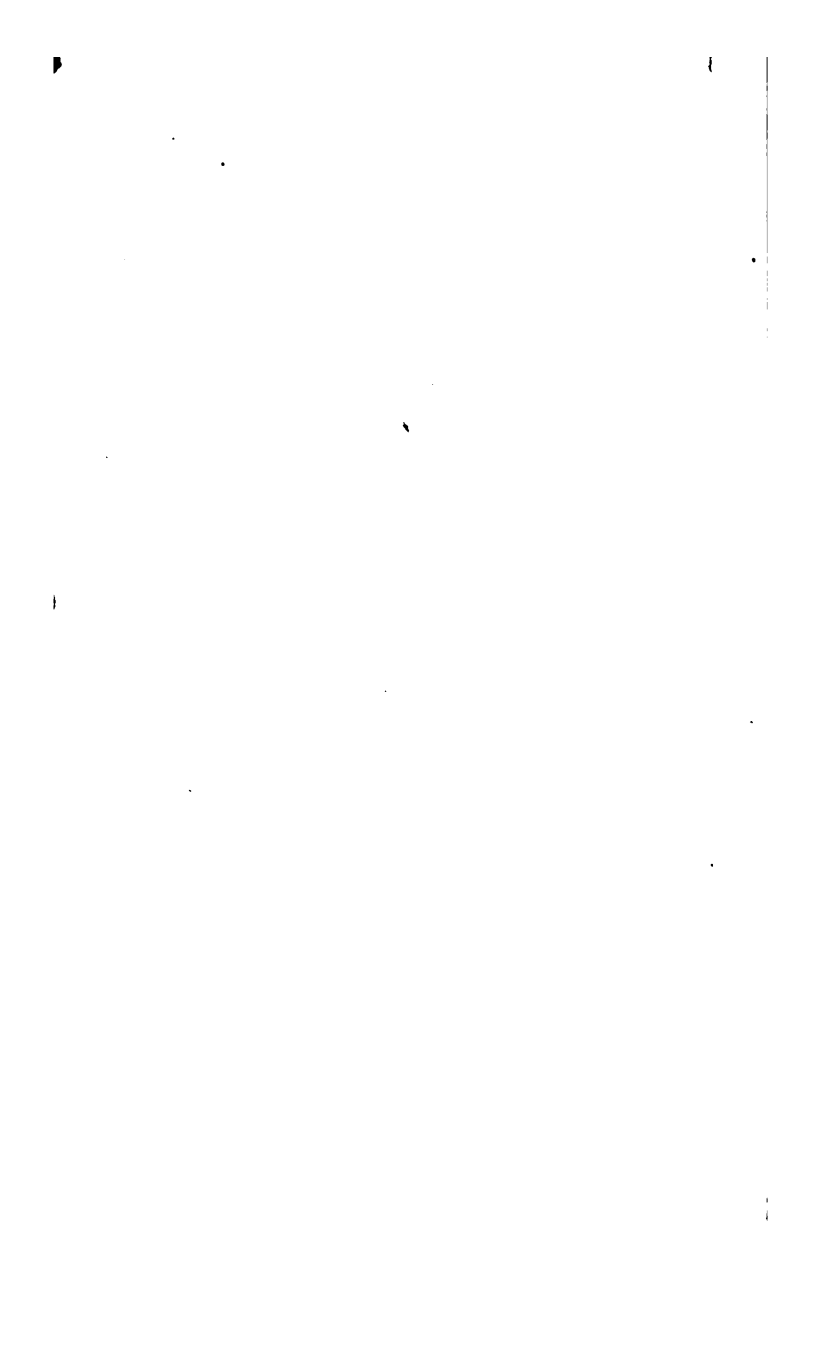


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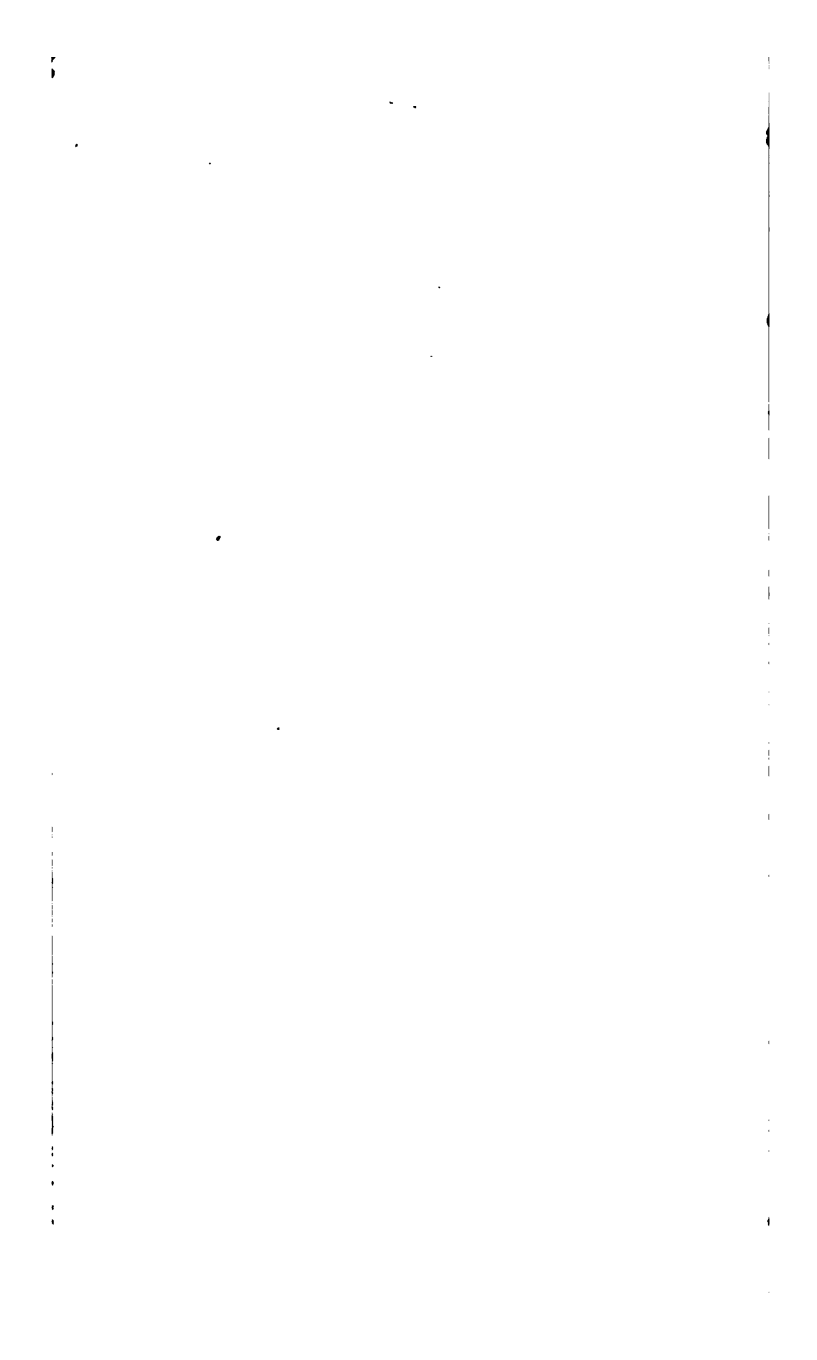


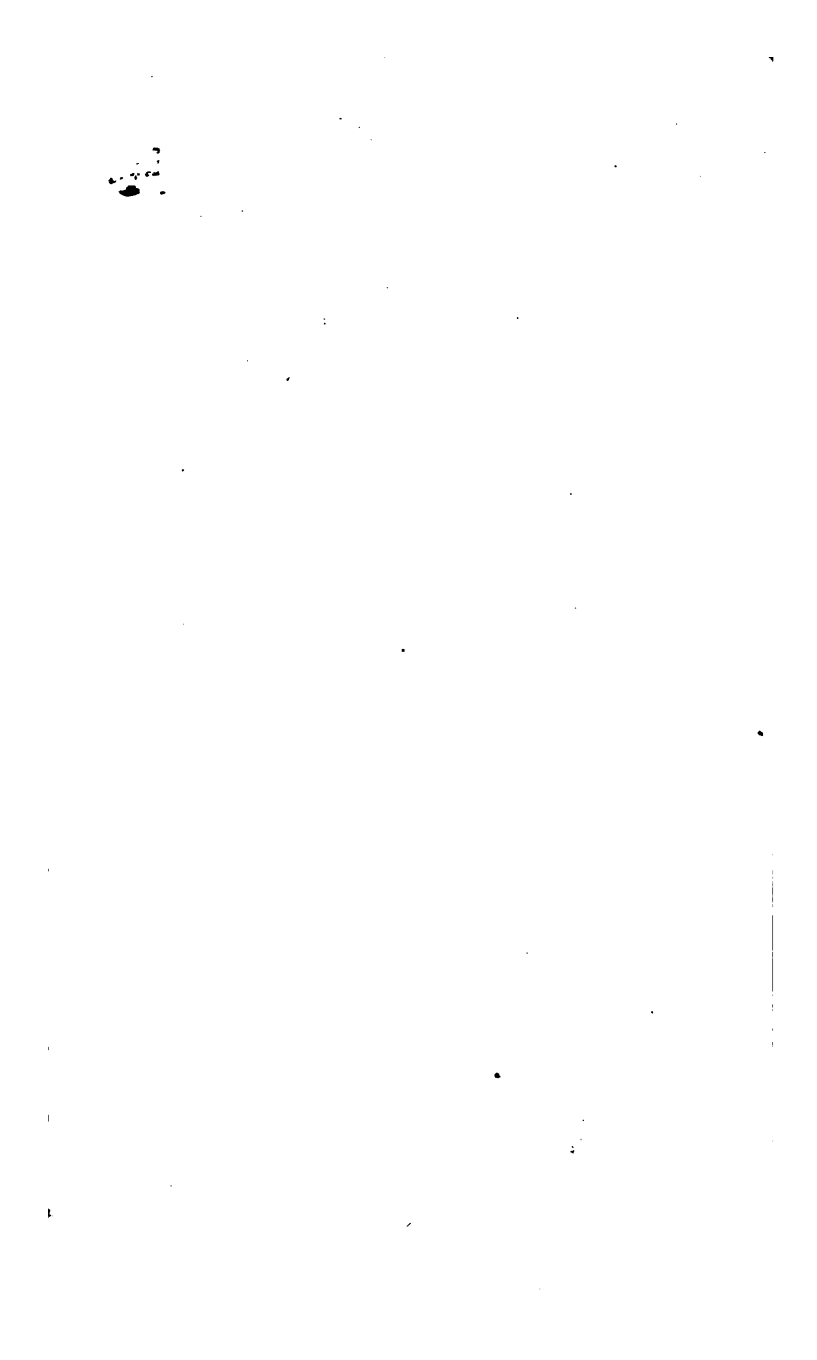


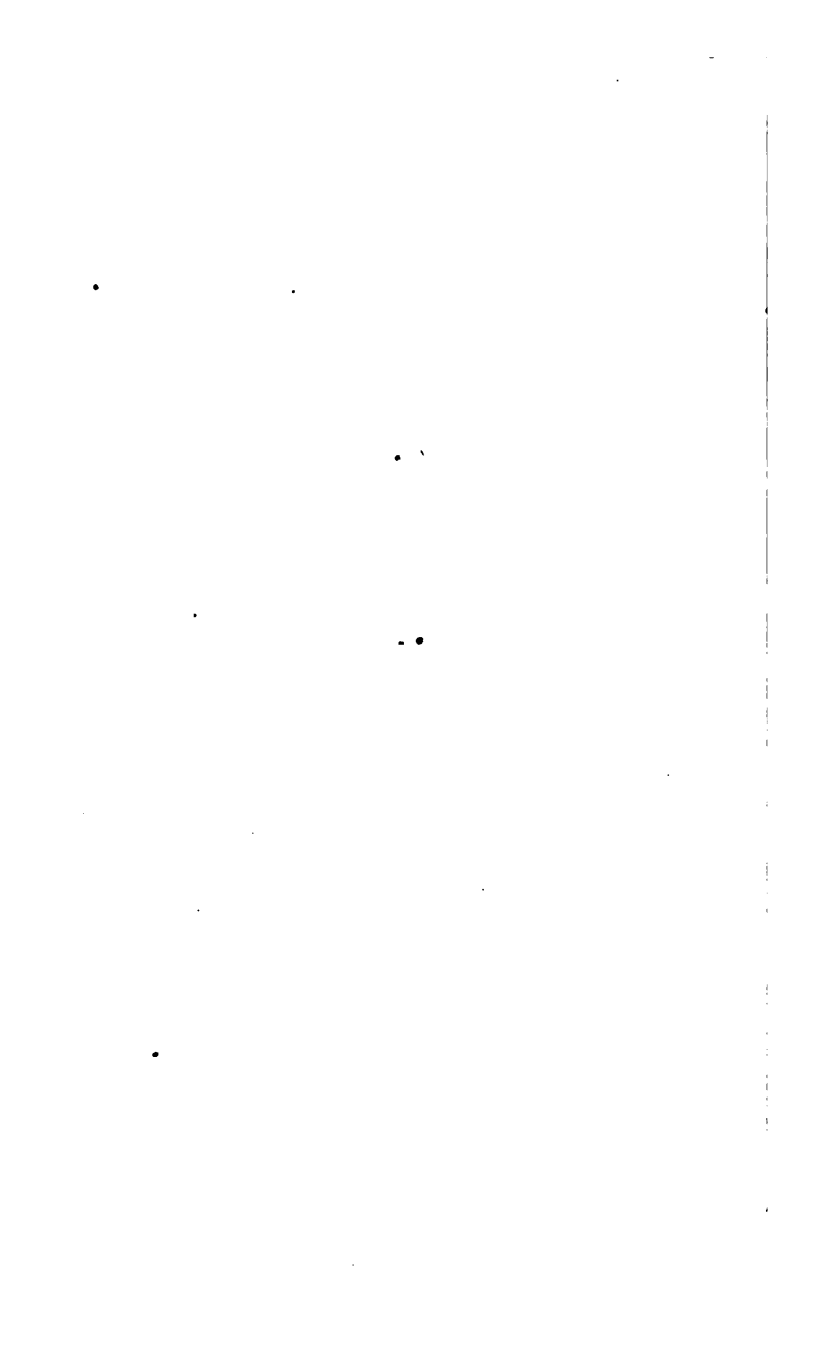


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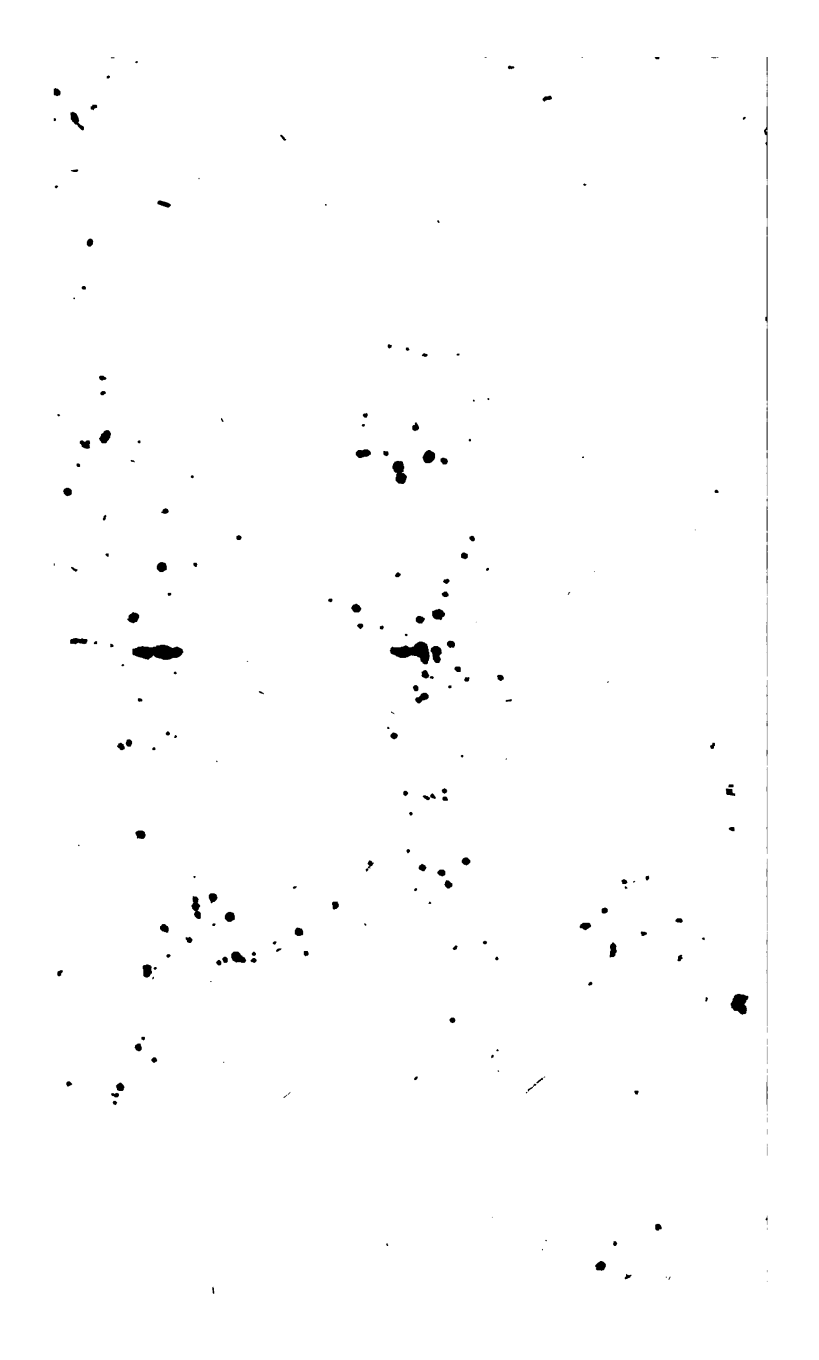
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THE  
TRAGEDIES OF ALFIERI.





THE  
TRAGEDIES  
OF  
VITTORIO. ALFIERI;

Translated from the Italian,

BY  
CHARLES. LLOYD.

SECOND EDITION.

• To which is prefixed,

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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VOL. IV.

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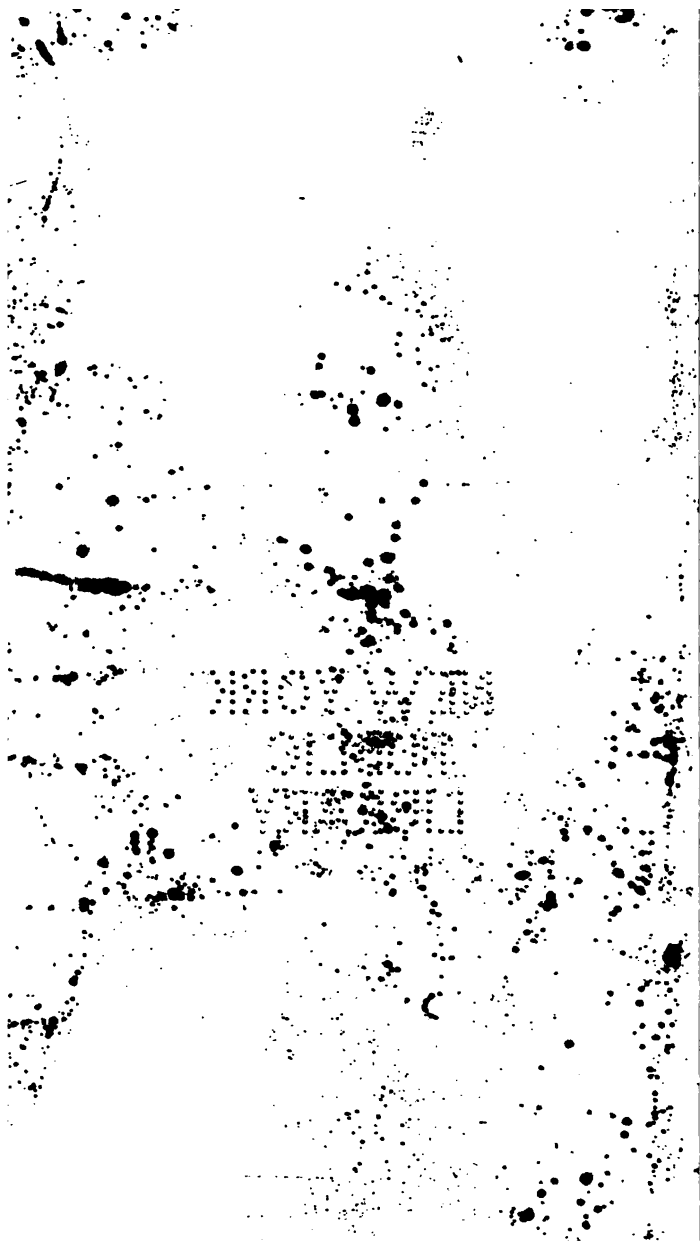
LONDON:

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1821.

C. M. D.



# DON GARCIA.

## A TRAGEDY.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COSMO.  
ELEONORA.  
DIEGO.

PIERO.  
GARCIA.  
*Guards.*

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SCENE,—The palace of Cosmo in Pisa.

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### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cosmo, Diego, Piero, Garcia.*

*Cos.* Oh sons, ye are not now assembled here  
In a light cause. 'Twill be most grateful to me,  
Since to the test ye now will all be brought,  
To make a trial of your several skills.  
But each of you, ere I divulge my thoughts,  
Swear to me solemnly to speak the truth,  
And in the secret of your hearts to hide  
The mystery which I now unfold to you.

*Di.* I swear it by this sword.

*Pi.* I by my father.

*Gar.* I swear it by my honour.

*Coa.* Hear me then.—

My cause is yours : let not your heart admit

Hate, love, or partialities, not mine.  
 Such I esteem you, that I do not think  
 That any counsel more than yours will serve me.  
 'Twere bootless now to recapitulate  
 Wherefore the light inhabitants of Florence  
 To me are irksome ; wherefore I retired  
 To seek in these beloved walls of Pisa  
 A calmer dwelling place, ye all well know.  
 From hence with safer and as tight a curb  
 I equally controul the turbulent,  
 Malignant, factious, faithless multitude,  
 Unfit to govern, indisposed to obey ;  
 Yet their obedience is no longer doubtful ;  
 Although, on this account, I do not sit  
 Securely on the throne. Our ancestors  
 Often encounter'd formidable perils ;  
 And every object to my heart suggests  
 A warning whisper, that I should not trust  
 A transient sunshine, a fallacious calm.  
 For the most part my enemies subdued,  
 Dispersed, or slain, I see alone of these  
 One formidable now remain to me :  
 He is allied to me in blood ; in mien  
 Conciliatory ; though I heed it not,  
 He evermore pursues me like my shadow.  
 Modest in words, obsequious in manners ;  
 But, in his inmost heart, replete with rage,  
 And circumventive purposes . . .

*Di.* He is . . .

*Cos.* The impious Salviati.—What though he  
 Be my near relative ; although the son  
 Of the brother of my mother, he no less,  
 Than was his father once, is our sworn foe.

That fierce old man, (you've heard me speak of him)  
Who preach'd of liberty, because the throne,  
Although he wish'd it, was beyond his reach;  
He that attempted to dissuade me from it,  
E'en on the very day in which I was,  
By the concurring senate and the people,  
Invited to the throne. My mother's tears,  
And his extreme old age, a pardon gain'd  
For his pestiferous audacity.

But this contested sceptre he not thus  
Could ever pardon me. What could he do,  
An impotent old man? The messengers  
Of death he heard, and sinking to the tomb,  
That ineffectual poison in his heart  
Which he conceal'd, e'en to the very dregs  
He pour'd it in the bosom of his son.  
Now I am sure that, son of a scorn'd father,  
He hates me bitterly, and, what is worse,  
He speaks it not: hence vigilance in me  
Is indispensable. My mother perhaps  
Was, while she lived, a hindrance to his views;  
Now she is dead we should no more delay;  
We should not only wrest from him the power  
Of injuring, but attempting it. The means  
The best and speediest for such effect,  
Freely let each of you point out to me.

*Di.* Father and lord, not only of ourselves  
But of all here, what can I say to thee  
Of policy of state, which thou know'st not?  
Methinks who pleases not his lord, of guilt,  
Is, by this fact, sufficiently convicted.  
What then is he who, hated, hates again?  
Say, has a monarch relatives? Since fate,

When she bestows a throne, denies all friends,  
 A prince should never tolerate a foe,  
 Neither an open foe nor foe conceal'd.  
 Take from him warning who before thee held  
 The Tuscan sceptre, Alexander, he  
 Who died, by treachery butcher'd ; he should teach  
 thee

E'en more than others to distrust relations.  
 Feign'd amity, and long-feign'd services,  
 And consanguinity, at length bestow'd  
 On the perfidious. Lorenzo means  
 To plunge his dagger in the royal breast.  
 The prince in part of his refractory mind  
 Was well aware, yet would he not diffide :  
 Nay, he caress'd him, made him of his friends,  
 So that at last he slew him.—Ah ! forestall  
 The hate of others : lenity, display'd  
 By those who can dispense with it, alone  
 To terror is attributed : and kings,  
 More than all thoughts, should hide their thoughts of  
 fear.

'Tis the most jealous mystery of state ;  
 Woe if it be discovered ; thence at once  
 The fears of others cease ; and what ensues ?  
 'Tis my advice that Salviati perish ;  
 But let him perish in the eye of day.  
 He offends thee ; and thou condemn'st him justly.  
 But suffer not obscure and timid clouds  
 To intercept the vivifying rays  
 Of thy unlimited authority.

*Gar.* If to a prince born on the throne, and thence  
 Beneath the tranquil shade of prosperous fate,  
 Amid the luxuries of a court matured,

I here should speak, as I intend to do,  
Father, thou would'st not hear me now at length.  
To mould the monarch' who has never seen  
The threatening aspect of adversity,  
Would be a vain, impracticable task.  
But, Cosmo, thou who from the throne afar,  
And from its hopes, amid vicissitudes,  
Hast past thy youthful years; on Tyber's banks,  
Now on the shores of Adria, and now  
'Mid lonely rocks of the Ligurian Alps,  
Concealed by thy mother; finally,  
Thou who hast felt the weight of powerful hatred,  
Lend me, I pray thee, a benignant ear.  
For many years have fortune, art, force, favour,  
Given to the Medicean race, by turns,  
An uncontrollable authority;  
To which more splendour, strength, security,  
Thou hast since added every day. Thou know'st  
That Alexander's murderer hoped in vain  
In a free state to meet with an asylum.  
Thy sword in Venice reach'd him: unavenged  
He fell there, where impartial laws alone  
Maintain authority: and in his claws  
The mighty lion saw the suppliant slain;  
Who in his roaring placed too firm a trust;  
He saw it, silently. Thy terrible name  
Made either sea that bounds Italia tremble.  
What wish for more? A throne without a foe?  
That never was: to slay them all? Hast thou  
A sword to do such prodigies? Reflect  
Upon thy ancestors: which of them died  
Beloved and powerful, in tranquillity?  
Cosmo alone, he who enjoy'd what power



To him was delegated; he whom power  
Sought in proportion as he sought it not.  
Think of the others: Julian transfix'd;  
The bold Lorenzo scarcely saved alive;  
Pedro expell'd; and Alexander slain.  
Yet these of blood were never avaricious.  
Ah! these impressively suggest to thee  
How slippery is the basis of that throne  
Founded on blood.—Thou wilt slay Salviati,  
Perhaps not guilty: other foes will rise;  
They may be slain; still others will succeed.—  
Suspicion's sword at length will turn its edge  
Insatiable 'gainst him that grasp'd the hilt.  
Ere it descend, hold it aloft a little:  
Strike but one blow, and it will rest no more.  
He who at once thee and thy fame offends,  
Oh father, pardon thou.

*Di.* 'Tis ever thus  
From me he differs.

*Pi.* I in years inferior,  
And thence in wisdom, since my sire commands,  
Will notwithstanding speak. Diego's words  
Are, like his actions, bold; nor do I blame,  
Although my judgment utterly dissents  
From his, the sentiments of Garcia.  
I, at the very name of Salviati,  
Which sounds to me like guilt, profoundly shudder.  
Another Salviati dared to aim  
At our Lorenzo the perfidious sword.  
Father, I only grieve that hitherto  
Thou'st shewn thyself too openly his foe.  
Not that thou e'er could'st change that double heart  
By more conciliatory practices;

ACT THE FIRST.

But now and then it happens that a prince  
Incurs less blame when he destroys his friends,  
Than when he punishes his foes.—But one  
Of the so many deaths with which the rage  
Of dark Tiberius ne'er was satisfied,  
One only was acceptable to Rome.  
Whether Sejanus's conspiracy  
Were true or false, his obsequies were mark'd  
With taunts, and songs, and smiles, and public joy.  
Friend to the prince, to all beside the foe ;  
Thence unavenged, abhorr'd, and vile, he fell.—  
Would'st thou at once have Salviati slain,  
And stop the comments of invidious tongues ?  
Do what thou hast not heretofore attempted :  
Feign love to him ; of pity thou dost rob him :  
Raise him ; thou giv'st him a large field for error ;  
Reward him ; he will be at once a traitor.  
Beneath the semblance of just punishment  
Thus cloak revenge ; and thus the prince obtains  
His object, and the name of merciful.

Cos. Yes, one may reign with maxims such as  
these ;

But thine, Diego, I esteem more regal.  
He who esteems it possible to govern  
Without deceit or terror is a fool.  
Little a son's, and less a prince's thoughts,  
Garcia, in thee I recognize. Speak'st thou  
To Cosmo king, of Cosmo citizen ?  
Would'st thou that on the throne I recollect  
My cruel destiny ?—And I will do it,  
By baffling the attacks of adverse fate.—  
What strange perplexing jargon dost thou use ?  
Thou callest terror, prudence ; abjectness,

Thou call'st humanity; and when I ask thee  
How I may slay my mortal enemy,  
Thou dost instruct me in the means to save him.

*Di. Garcia*, my younger brother, born to obey me,  
It is no wonder should he not possess  
A spirit correspondent to the throne;  
And if he meek and private qualities  
Profess or feign . . .

*Gar.* Virtue will always be  
The same; for subjects and for kings the same.  
Question'd, I speak my thoughts: if such a soul  
As thine be requisite to royalty,  
I feel rejoiced that I expect no sceptre:  
And if, as thou allegest, I was born  
To obedience, I shall willingly obey,  
But him alone who knoweth how to rule.

*Cos.* And I am he. And do thou recollect  
That I know how to make myself obey'd:  
Love and respect Diego as myself.—  
I sought alone to know your sentiments,  
And not to be advised. I saw, I knew,  
I heard: enough.—To you, in words and deeds,  
And even thoughts, I only now am law.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Diego, Piero, Garcia.*

*Gar.* He from our deeds, far more than from our  
words,  
Can betwixt us discriminate. But yet,  
I feel no grief that I have thus reveal'd  
My judgment to my father: to my lips  
Perchance the feelings which my heart contains

Should run less volubly ; but hitherto  
I have not learn'd the talent to suppress,  
And now I fear it never will be mine.

*Di.* What more doth Cosmo want ? Within his  
palace,  
Among his sons, he finds a lofty censor  
Who teaches him to reign.

*Gar.* What fearest thou ?  
Thou ever wilt be more acceptable  
To him than me. To kings those are most welcome  
Who best know how in their sword's edge to place  
Infallibility.

*Pi.* Why should your rage,  
Because ye differ in opinion, thus  
Transgress all bounds ? I too dissent from you ;  
But not, on this account, I love you less.  
Brothers, and sons, and subjects of one father  
Are not we all ? Now go . . .

*Gar.* Let each of us  
Indulge his own opinions : praise I seek not ;  
Nor cast I blame on others. Certainly,  
I say, that we shall all the grievous load  
Of public hate endure, if Cosmo chuse  
To adopt deceit or force ; from this will rise  
The scorn of others, and from that the rage ;  
The vengeance from them both.

*Di.* Oh ! wise and great  
Assuredly thou art : may it please thee  
To sit the moderator of our youth.—  
Now, when wilt thou be silent ? To thy sire  
Thou wert already known ; by him already,  
In such esteem as thou deservest, held.  
Go ; if thou lovest darkness, live obscure ;

But, since thou addest nothing to our brightness,  
Make us not shadows of thy central gloom.

*Gar.* I call that infamy which thou call'st splendour.

But my discourse of that peace robs you not  
Which is not in yourselves : peace ill is bought  
With universal cries ; ill with the blood  
Of innocent citizens. An alien  
Among you I am born ; but, since that I  
Nathless ~~am~~ born among you, do not hope  
That I shall ever hide from you the truth.

*Pi.* Thou art not, Garcia, to thy sire a foe :  
Then why the friend to him that does offend him ?

*Gar.* The friend of justice, and of nothing else.  
To you I thus address myself, but keep  
Towards strangers an inflexible reserve.  
I am willing to believe one supreme lord,  
Where he doth keep himself within the pale  
Of natural rights, doth best bested a people ;  
But tyranny ? ... It is my execration ;  
And ah, my father doth too much affect it !  
I ever was more tender of his honour  
Than of his power : with a true love I love him,  
And if o'er him my prayers will not avail,  
They shall be all turn'd tyranny to lessen.

*Di.* And I (if I avail) will concentrate  
My efforts all to give stability  
To sacred power, which a rash rebel dares  
To stigmatize unjustly.

*Gar.* The design  
Is worthy of thyself.

*Di.* Dost thou insult me ?  
Soon will I make thee ...

*Pi.* Stop : replace thy sword.

*Gar.* Permit him, Piero, to display his sword.  
He of himself would give a worthy sample,  
A hopeful omen of his future reign,  
His sword against his brother.

*Pi.* Ah, refrain . . .

And thou, be silent! . . .

*Di.* Change thy style, or I . . .

*Gar.* I clearly see : anger in thee supplies  
The place of reason. I am not incensed,  
Whom reason only moves.

*Di.* Perhaps thou art  
More backward in performance than in speech ;  
Hence art thou not incensed.

*Gar.* Far more am I  
To terror, than to action, indisposed.

*Di.* And who knows this ?

*Gar.* My sword.—And thou should'st know it . . .  
If I were not thy brother.

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Diego, Piero.*

*Di.* Thou, my brother ?  
We evermore were too dissimilar.

*Pi.* Appease thyself ; thy generous resentment  
He merits not. Heard'st thou his insolence ?  
Heard'st thou how proudly he exults in treason,  
Much less then blushes at it ?

*Di.* Thou shalt see  
One day, that he will be forced to renounce  
His foolish pride : wait till I reign, and then . . .

*Pi.* To thee, 'tis true, the throne belongs by right ;

But not by accident speaks Garcia thus.  
 Well know I, that my father hath reposed  
 All his affection, all his hope in thee ;  
 To him art thou far dearer than the light :  
 But he descends towards the decline of life.  
 Thou know'st how love in aged hearts grows cold ;  
 How feebly hoary age defends itself  
 'Gainst female stratagems. This Garcia is  
 His mother's darling : she's possess'd by him :  
 And, thou know'st, loves us little . . .

*Di.* What fear I ?

The throne to me is due ; not e'en my sire  
 Could take it from me. Grant that he could do it,  
 I should suffice to re-obtain it. Well,  
 Our father knows us.

*Pi.* It is true ; but art . . .

*Di.* Art to the vile I give. I know that he  
 Is too dear to his mother. Equally  
 Were he to Cosmo, should I heed it ? no !  
 I fear not, hate not, envy not my brother.

*Pi.* But thou know'st not what culpable designs  
 Garcia hides in his heart . . .

*Di.* And do I ever  
 Investigate the purposes of others ?

*Pi.* But unknown to his father . . .

*Di.* And would I,  
 Think'st thou, repeat them to him ? That would be  
 In me far viler than in other men :  
 Since betwixt us harsh menaces have past,  
 Each word of mine would seem like craft or ven-  
 geance.

I know my father, and am well aware  
 How little he is able to subdue



The first assaults of rage ; to fatal proof  
 'Twere better not to bring him. If my brother  
 Deteriorates spontaneously, let him  
 Alone abide the consequence of this.  
 But if he any more attempts to offend me,  
 I hope, he cannot say, that for his wrongs  
 I've sought redress from any but himself.

## ACT THE SECOND.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cosmo, Eleonora.*

*Cos.* No, I am not mistaken ; no : a son  
 More worthy than Diego we possess not ;  
 The honour of the throne, his father's safety,  
 The universal peace, he has at heart.  
 I had indubitable proofs of this  
 From his own lips a little while ago.

*Ele.* Then hast thou never in my Garcia found  
 Love, judgment, gentleness of character,  
 And pliancy of heart ?

*Cos.* What words are these ?  
 How dost thou designate that rebel spirit ?  
 Of all my sons, he is the only one  
 Unworthy of the name. What do I say,  
 Among my sons ? Far, far more than by him,  
 By every other am I loved and revered.  
 A serpent, who on me turns all his rage,  
 And his dire poison, in my breast I cherish.  
 How difficultly, when to him I listen'd,  
 Did I restrain my rage ! Surmise is now  
 Matured to certainty : and Garcia is . . .

*Ele.* What has he done? What has he said? In what

Offended thee? Alas...

*Cos.* What has he said?

Whilst of a mortal foe I plan the death,  
He dares to counsel me to pardon him.  
Thence, much as I abhor him, he abhors not  
The guilty *Salviati*? Thence my foes  
Are not his foes?

*Ele.* And is not every man  
Thy subject that dwells here? If this, or that,  
It pleaseth thee to slay, dost thou not do it?  
'Tis in a son a venial offence  
To supplicate his sire to be less cruel.  
'Tis true, that neither *Piero* nor *Diego*  
From bloodshed dared dissuade thee: *Garcia* dared.  
What doth this indicate, except that he  
Is more benignant, and for human blood  
Pants not?

*Cos.* This overweening, ill-placed love,  
More than it ought to do, thy judgment blinds.  
Thou'st made an idol to thyself in *Garcia*;  
Save him thou lovest, and thou seest nothing:  
That which I call a crime, dar'st thou in him  
Call virtue?—

This altercation is not new betwixt us,  
But every day it more displeases me.  
And thou wilt make an effort to myself  
Most acceptable, if within thy heart  
Thou hide a love so partial and unjust.

*Ele.* An unjust love? Ah! if there be who thus  
Can prove it to me, I at once will change it.  
Not on the words, but actions of my sons,

**My observation has been fix'd.**

*Cos.* So be it ;

If then thou wilt, in spite of me, let him  
 be dear to thee ; so that I never more  
 Hear thee excuse his failings. In my palace,  
 The first and only virtue is to please me :  
 This virtue hitherto I see not in him :  
 It doth belong to thee to teach him this ;  
 To thee, . . . if thou sincerely lovest him.

*Ele.* And hath not Garcia always bent his brow  
 To thy behests ?

*Cos.* What merit hath obedience ?  
 And this sufficeth it ? And not to do it,  
 Who now would have the hardihood ?—He ought  
 To speak not only as I speak, but ought  
 To think e'en as I think : he who has not  
 A nature like to mine, should change it : yes :  
 Not simulate, but change it. Of my race,  
 And of my realm, I am the head ; the soul  
 Am I, with which each living creature here  
 Is animated.—Nor, on guilty Garcia,  
 Had he not been my son, had I bestow'd  
 Even a warning ere I punish'd him.  
 Hence is his crime assuredly augmented ;  
 But yet once more, or ere his chastisement,  
 Once only will I make him hear a voice,  
 That from perdition's path may rescue him.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Cosmo, Eleonora, Piero.*

*Pi.* Father, most urgent business brings me to  
 thee ;

With thee I would confer at leisure.

*Cos.* Oh!

What strange disturbance on thy face I read!

Speak; what hath happen'd? say.

*Pi.* I cannot speak it,  
Except to thee alone.

*Ele.* What can a son  
Have of mysterious for a father's ears,  
Thus from a mother carefully conceal'd?

*Cos.* I am a father; but at the same time  
I am a prince; nor hast thou hitherto,  
Lady, with me my public burthens shared;  
Nor wilt thou share them, if, as I suspect...

*Ele.* Thou dost suspect the truth. Scarcely had I  
The native shores of my Sebetus quitted,  
Than I, become the sharer of thy fate,  
All my attachments, all my objects bounded,  
Within these royal walls. In me thou gain'd'st  
A consort, and a handmaid, nothing more.  
Clearly I saw my lord thought every proof  
Of love was centred in a blind obedience.  
Hence always I obey'd; this thou know'st well;  
Often in tones of gratitude hast thou  
Praised me for this. Would'st thou remain alone?  
I leave thee: and already I infer  
From him who tells it, what this secret is:  
And I know why I only should not hear it.  
But I wish not to hear Piero's tongue,  
Possessing such alacrity to injure:  
If only to the detriment of strangers  
It were exerted, I should not at least  
Then tremble at it, as I tremble now.  
I, of his well-known arts, am doubtlessly

A most unwelcome witness.

*Pi.* Thou hast placed  
All thy maternal fondness on one son ;  
Hence are the others guilty ; and, meanwhile,  
Hence do I suffer heavy punishment ;  
And, indeed, may it fall alone on me !  
My tongue is evermore prepared to injure ?  
This thy beloved son says so, to whom  
I bear no hatred, though I envy him :  
Let him confess, if, or in words or deeds,  
I ever injured him.—A horrid stain  
Thou fixest on me, mother : yet should I,  
If any other than my mother fix'd it,  
Be more afflicted ; or if any one  
Heard it, besides my father and my lord,  
To me imputed. But I know my duty ;  
I ought to suffer and to hold my peace ;  
I suffer, and am silent.

*Cos.* Lady, would'st thou,  
With manners such as these, in tumult throw  
Our palace ?

*Ele.* Ah, that others would not do it !  
And hath not an abominable pest  
Already fix'd its residence among us ?  
I yield my place : and may I never know,  
And never thou believe, his odious secrets !

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Cosmo, Piero.*

*Cos.* Piero, speak.

*Pi.* My mother's prophecies  
In part are true. An execrable pest

Rises among us.

*Cos.* Where I reign, no pest  
Exists that can mature ; e'en from the roots  
It shall be torn up : speak.

*Pi.* I know full well  
That all depends on thee : of every wound  
Thou art the sovereign healer ; hence I seek  
In thee alone a speedy remedy.—  
Erewhile there rose, 'twixt Garcia and Diego,  
A war of words : their fury with great pains  
I check'd ; but certainly 'tis not extinguish'd.  
Inflamed, and fierce, Garcia went out : with prayers,  
Mingled with force, Diego I restrain'd :  
The aggressor he will never be, no never ;  
But, from the other, if one look escape,  
One word, one gesture to provoke him, heavens !  
I tremble to reflect on what may follow.

*Cos.* Perpetual discord ; I already knew it :  
But what new provocation hath impell'd them  
To yield to such ungovernable rage ?

*Pi.* When thou erewhile didst quit us, we remain'd  
In earnest conference. Diego, fired  
In words as well as deeds with noble ardour,  
With that imposing frankness he possesses,  
Openly blamed his brother Garcia,  
(And blamed, methinks, not wrongfully,) that he,  
Alone, dared in thy presence to defend  
The guilty cause of Salviati. Pierced  
E'en to his inmost heart (for the rebuke  
Was too well founded,) Garcia had recourse  
To threats against his brother : and had he  
Outraged Diego only ! . . . but to thee

I ought not to repeat that which escaped,  
While hot with passion, from his breast : and perhaps  
He thought it not ; anger sometimes excites  
To utter that which is not. And to me,  
While I essay'd to reconcile them both,  
He darted pungent and injurious words :  
But this imports not.—'Tis expedient now,  
That he should hear the thunder of thy voice,  
So that this contest gain no further strength.

*Cos.* There is no doubt ; all things convince me  
of it :

Garcia, that impious son, betrays his sire,  
His lord, his honour, and himself, at once.  
He would, by this aggression on Diego,  
Obliquely wound his father : he assumes  
Blind confidence from blind maternal love ;  
And to the highest pitch audacity  
In him is risen. Erewhile, I wish'd to hear  
If he would dare deliberately disclose  
The vile and guilty friendship in my presence  
That he hath long encouraged in his heart :  
And it is not to me, oh no ! unknown,  
As much as witlessly he thinks it is.

*Pi.* Thou, then, indeed dost know it, that he is  
Clandestinely of Salviati ?

*Cos.* Yes ;

I know it ; thoroughly convinced . . .

*Pi.* Himself,  
Against his will . . .

*Cos.* And why have ye conceal'd  
It hitherto from me ?

*Pi.* He is our brother . . .

*Cos.* And am not I the father of you all ?



*Pi.* I hoped, indeed, that to the path of duty  
He would return ; and still I dare to hope it.  
Still in that unripe age are we, thou seest,  
When man is most apt to be led astray.  
Each of us might, caught in such snares, become  
Guilty of similar failings.

*Cos.* Ah ! no snares  
Could ever make you traitors : for ye are, . . .  
Diego, and thyself . . .

*Pi.* Diego never ;  
I hope so of myself ; and every man  
Affirms it of himself while he is sane.  
But who can answer for the consequence,  
If love, the enemy of reason, rule him ?

*Cos.* What say'st thou ? Love !

*Pi.* If thou reflect on this,  
Less heinous will his fault appear to thee.

*Cos.* Love, say'st thou ? Love for whom ?

*Pi.* Thou know'st it, father.

*Cos.* I know that he's a traitor ; that he oft  
Dares meet in secret interview, at night,  
With Salviati in my palace, here,  
But that love prompted him, I never knew :  
What may this love be ? Speak.

*Pi.* Ah wretched me ! . . .

I would excuse him, and I have accused him.

*Cos.* Speak : I command thee ; and hide nothing  
from me,

Or I . . .

*Pi.* Ah ! father, pardon him, I pray,  
This youthful indiscretion, and ascribe  
Nothing that he does to a will depraved.  
Love only makes him *seem* a traitor. He

Loves guilty Salviati's guiltless daughter :  
The gentle Julia, whom thou hast perchance  
Retain'd a hostage for her father's faith,  
Among th' illustrious damsels in thy court ;  
Julia he loves ; she, ere scarce seen, inflamed him.  
He loves her secretly ; and, loved again,  
He lives in sweet though ineffectual hope.  
Now that the father of a maid beloved  
Should not seem guilty to her paramour,  
Why should this seem so wonderful to thee ?

*Cos.* All men then know the errors of my sons  
More than myself ? All men excuse them ? hide  
them ?

His partial mother incontestably  
Is privy also to this guilty secret ;  
And seconds it perchance . . .

*Pi.* In truth, I think not . . .  
But yet, who knows . . .

*Cos.* This simulated love  
What can it be, except a specious veil  
For future treasons ? Can my son be dear  
To Julia for his own sake ? Is she not  
The daughter of my foe ? And hath she not,  
E'en with her milk, imbibed hatred for me,  
And for my blood ? Deep treasons are conceal'd  
Beneath this love : the daughter, doubtlessly,  
Is made an instrument of his revenge  
By the shrewd father ; I am not mistaken.  
And my own son ? . . .

*Pi.* Perchance thou constructurest well  
Their secret schemes : but think it not of Garcia :  
A fervid love assuredly excites him ;  
And the blind guide doth often not conduct

To a good path : perchance he hence has err'd.  
Now that thou know'st the whole do thou restrain  
him,

But with a gentle rein : do not so act,  
That I with reason may regret to-day  
That I've betray'd, although by chance I did it,  
His jealous amorous secret. It is true,  
He never told it to me ; but he is  
Reserved to all, and most so to his brothers :  
But yet I knew it.—Now, since I have said it,  
Turn it to his advantage. Wean him, father,  
From this disgraceful fondness ; and at once  
Appease his unjust rage against his brothers.

*Cos.* Thou hast done well to speak : a son and  
subject  
It was thy duty ; I shall seek to know  
More of this matter.—But Diego comes.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Diego, Cosmo, Piero.*

*Cos.* My son, what would'st thou ? Justice ? Thou  
shalt have it.

*Di.* Father, what ails thee ? On thy austere brow  
Sits dark displeasure. Perhaps our strife hath wrought  
Disturbance in thee ? It had been, Piero,  
Better indeed for us to have hid it from him :  
And what ? Fear'st thou that for my brother's insult  
Anger in me all limits would transgress ?  
Ah, let my father think no more of it ;  
Nor let it raise in him resentful feelings.  
Esteem me not offended ; I alone  
Pity th' offender : this is my revenge.

*Cos.* Oh, thou art worthy of a better brother  
Than Garcia is ! Fraternal injuries  
Thou dost endure ; and it becomes thee well :  
But that he has infringed my laws, that he  
Erewhile contended with thee, this is not  
The first sole cause of my profound displeasure.  
His turbulence, I clearly see, springs not  
From the impetuosity of youth ;  
'Tis the worse fruit of a malignant heart :  
I am compell'd e'en to the fountain head  
Of the mortiferous pestilence to go ;  
I am compell'd t' investigate the whole,  
The whole to hear. Imperiously it behoves me  
To know the deeds, th' affections, and the words,  
The enterprises, e'en the secret thoughts,  
Of one, a royal youth, who, more than others,  
Has power to injure, and may fear it less.

*Di.* Yet do not now ascribe to guilt in him,  
I pray thee, that which erewhile, when incensed,  
He said to me.

*Pi.* Thou seest clearly, father,  
If Garcia had a corresponding soul,  
Peace would be permanent betwixt them both ;  
Nor doth Diego feign . . .

*Di.* Nor hitherto  
Have I suspected that my brother feign'd,  
Or was malignant. No, my father, no ;  
Although he differ from me, I perceive  
The seeds of virtue in him ; I esteem him  
A little from the path of rectitude.  
Unconsciously misled : he cherishes  
Private affections in his princely nature ;  
Hence are those phrases which appear so strange ;

Hence he so frequently dissents from us ;  
And hence th' injurious lofty pomp with which  
He preaches to us his ascetic virtues.  
I first, inflamed with anger, in thy presence,  
Calling him hypocritical and false,  
Presumed to assault him : to a lofty heart  
Th' indignity was insupportable ;  
And scarcely was in me my wrath appeased,  
Ere I repented of it. I come here,  
In the first place, expressly to recant ;  
And inasmuch as my officiousness  
May have excited prejudice in thee  
Against thy son, to abrogate at once  
Impressions sinister, as they are false.

*Cos.* Garcia assuredly is less a traitor,  
Than thou magnanimous.

*Di.* We are thy sons . . .

*Cos.* Thou art indeed : Piero and thyself.

*Pi.* At least, I prize myself in thinking so.

*Di.* Ah ! do not deem thy other son yet lost :  
I do beseech thee, to thyself, and us,  
Reclaim him, father ; but with gentle treatment.  
Advice, far more than force, will operate  
On his tenacious heart ; and never shew him  
That, less than us, thou lovest him.

*Cos.* My sons,  
Enough, enough. Withdraw : I will indulge you.  
Ere long to me, Piero, thou send here  
Thy brother Garcia ; I will speak to him.  
Nor do I less commend in thee, Piero,  
The strict solicitude, than in Diego  
The sublime magnanimity of heart.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Cosmo.*

*Cos.* Oh worthy pair of sons!—What star of mine  
Will join to you a third with such deserts?  
Though I deem'd Garcia guilty, I ne'er deem'd  
His guilt was so atrocious. But, methinks,  
With what impression ought I to behold  
Diego, who, though destined to command,  
Solicits pardon for received offences.  
It grieves me to be forced to praise in him  
That with my tongue, which in my heart I blame.  
But yet he is a novice in the arts  
Of government; in time he'll be more wise.  
I see within him all the qualities  
That form a perfect prince. I must instruct him,  
By my example, that, to govern well,  
The less we should forgive, e'en as the ties  
Of blood are more implicit, and the more  
Th' offender to the offended is allied.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cosmo, Garcia.*

*Gar.* See me, oh father, at thy call.—Thy words,  
If it be lawful to anticipate  
With prompt and humble filial respect,  
I now, by first accusing my own fault,  
Can somewhat mitigate thy just displeasure,  
And my own shame. Oh, could I thus appear

A little less unworthy in thy eyes  
Of pardon ! nought else in the world I wish.  
Stung by Diego, I insulted him ;  
I do regret this deeply : nor could'st thou  
A punishment inflict that might compare  
With my repentance. Dearer to thyself,  
Older than I, and by long habitude  
Of all my actions the appointed censor,  
Diego should find nothing else in me  
But full obsequious silence, patience, peace.

*Cos.* What I would say to thee, thou hast in part  
Forestall'd ; but not the whole. It pleases me  
To hear that from thy breast all hate is banish'd ;  
Whate'er may be its cause, I feel no wrath  
Paternal, that subsides not at thy words.  
I never yet have entertain'd a doubt  
But that the rage would be no sooner cool'd,  
Which to exasperating words impell'd you,  
Than that both instantly would come to me  
To make atonement. Now there doth arise,  
T' obliterate the first, betwixt you both  
The nobler strife of self-disparagement ;  
Whence I absolve you both, and neither deem  
Guilty in this.—Further I now would say.—  
Within my mind have I revolved thy counsel,  
Which, as inopportune and indiscreet,  
I blamed this morning. Now thou art convinced  
That the first judgment is not always best :  
E'en in proportion as I meditate,  
'Mid various other sentiments, on thine,  
Less they displease me. Not that I believe  
That I should blindly trust in Salviati ;  
Too much he hates me : but he also fears,

And fears effectively. Had I the power  
To introduce betwixt our mutual hate  
A valid obstacle, or to devise  
Such ties as might reciprocally join us  
In firm alliance, in one word a means  
Whence common interests might league us both,  
And make us both secure, I might perchance  
Not only wean my heart from schemes of blood,  
But further, with conciliatory thoughts  
Dispose it to relent . . .

*Gar.* What do I hear ?

Can this be true, my father ? What a tide  
Of lofty transport inundates my breast !  
Not that I dare found the presumptuous hope  
On my opinions, that I can instruct  
My sovereign lord ; but real joy I feel  
To be convinced, that, to obtain his ends,  
My father rather chuses to use means  
Of gentleness, than menaces and blood.  
Centred is all authority in him  
Who sits upon the throne ; he, at his will,  
Can mitigate, or strengthen fear or hate,  
In all his vassals.—Could he utterly  
Eradicate them from the hearts of others,  
And from his own !—But niggard fate denies  
Such blest exemption to the breasts of monarchs.

*Cos.* But what would be the consequence, if I  
With too great mildness should reproach myself ?

*Gar.* Was a good heart e'er self-reproach'd for  
this ?

Nor should'st thou fear that injury to thee  
Can thence result. The customary hate  
Of those by royal prejudice pursued,



To Salviati's elevated soul  
Is utterly unknown. He knows full well  
That he has forfeited thy love for ever :  
He hath no hope, nor hath he any fear,  
To check his projects : for himself he fears not ;  
He, when he lost thy favour, lost his all.  
Yet, notwithstanding this, he doth propose  
To all his deeds, one uniform condition,  
How he may please thee best ; and thou by means  
Direct canst never lose him, if thou dost not  
Take indirect ones to indulge thy rancour.

*Cos.* There are then who deceive me ? . . . Oh sad  
lot

Of those who are most powerful ! How ferocious  
Have others represented him to me !  
Here, all are emulously fraudulent ;  
And each one to his private projects makes  
My power subservient . . .

*Gar.* It is known to all  
That Salviati's father was thy foe :  
Hence each one emulously paints his son  
To thee an infamous, perfidious rebel . . .

*Cos.* Ah, thou dost speak too truly ! Ill a prince,  
If others penetrate his heart, can know  
The hearts of other men.—But tell me further :  
Whence dost thou now so accurately know  
What are his dispositions ? Although he  
Has followed me to Pisa, in my court  
Him have I never seen. What do I say,  
In court ? All human converse he avoids,  
And drags on such a solitary life,  
That one would say, that he in secret broods  
O'er heavy incommunicable thoughts ;

And that of every man he is mistrustful.

*Gar.* If it were lawful, I would say . . .

*Cos.* Speak on :

The truth is pleasing to me ; I delight  
To hear thee.

*Gar.* In thy footsteps here he came,  
But only to remove from thee all doubt  
Of his fidelity ; for in the midst  
Of factious spirits, with which Florence teems,  
Thou always would'st have held that faith precarious.  
With him sometimes I have had interviews ;  
This I deny not : ah, hadst thou but heard him !  
His heart surcharged with bitterness and anguish,  
With how much reverence, and with how much fear,  
He, with subdued resentment, mourn'd thy error ;  
And never thee, but thy perfidious friends,  
The persevering foes to truth alone  
He blamed for this ; and even deems not thine  
Thy own suspicions . . .

*Cos.* But that thou'rt my son  
He knows ; how tell thee ? . . .

*Gar.* Perhaps he thinks me  
Of pity capable . . .

*Cos.* I understand :  
Thy influence with me in his favour . . .

*Gar.* He  
Knows that my words on thee are ineffectual . . .

*Cos.* Thou hast perchance divulged to him thy  
secrets :—

Thou always sad ; always, like him, alone :—  
Perhaps common sympathies unite you both.  
He pitying thy wrongs, as thou pitiest his,  
Without exception may not hate my blood ?

He hears thee, speaks to thee? far different . . .

*Gar.* Ah different, yes, from that which fame reports him.

Thou dost inspire me with a hardihood  
Which I had never of myself assumed.  
Know, that thy dearest friend (chuse whom thou wilt

'Mong those whom thou with honours and with gold  
Hast laden, I will not say surfeited,) I swear,  
is less devoted to thy service,  
And loves thee less, and less would risk for thee,  
Than that degraded, obscure Salviati,  
Assured in heart of his own innocence,  
Which, to increase the poignance of his woes,  
He's not allow'd to prove.—If in contempt  
He such is found, reflect what he would be  
If worthily esteem'd.

*Cos.* . . . Truly this man  
Hath roused a tender interest in thy heart :  
Thy words are strong, yet hence I blame thee not.  
Since thou assertest it, he must at least  
Have some good qualities : but speak ; and speak  
The truth ; thou know'st not how to lie already ?  
Now do his virtues only thus excite  
Thee to commend him ?

*Gar.* Ah ! since thou dost think  
I know not how to lie, I will not now  
E'en partially divulge to thee the truth.  
Love also rouses me : I burn for Julia ;  
And hence have double pity for the father.

*Cos.* And he knows this ?

*Gar.* I told it him.

*Cos.* He aids thee ?

*Gar.* No, he condemns it : I condemn it also.  
Nay, what dost thou suppose me ?

*Cos.* Circumspect,  
But not in time.

*Gar.* Love doth not blind me, no ;  
Nor doth it rob me of integrity.  
I speak to thee in praise of Salviati,  
Since in subservience to his principles  
He holds all selfish interests : otherwise  
I would have represented him to thee,  
If I had found him otherwise ; were he  
As he is adverse, to my love propitious.  
I have not learn'd to varnish o'er the truth ;  
Nor do I even with a latent hope  
Foster the passion that consumes my vitals :  
Which neither I will nourish in my heart,  
Nor can I e'er extinguish it. I know  
That thy inflexible and austere will  
From Julia separates me eternally.  
Pity from thee I do not ask : too well  
I know, for this immitigable wound  
I have no other remedy than death !  
I have entreated for her innocent father,  
For such I know he is ; but were he not,  
Love would ne'er lead me to betray my own.

*Cos.* Perfidious, I would hear from thy own lips  
The whole ; but thou speak'st not the whole to me.  
Thy love for Julia is thy least offence.

*Gar.* Oh Heaven ! What do I hear ? Must I ne'er  
deem

Goodness in thee sincere ?

*Cos.* Thou never should'st,  
Thinking of thee, no never !—Fully thou

Dost know thy heart, thou traitor.—I erewhile  
Have sought the means, whence I might take away  
That miscreant from my eyes : fortune, behold,  
Brings them to me ; and indicates at once  
The instrument. Is it thy wish to clear  
Thyself of turpitude in my opinion ?  
Would'st thou that I should deem love thy sole  
crime ?

Little of this declining day remains :  
At the first gathering of the shades of night,  
Let guilty *Salviati* come unknown,  
Clandestinely, within my palace walls,  
As heretofore he has been wont to come ;  
And thou invite him ; and do thou conduct him  
To the accustom'd haunt, in which so oft  
He has conversed with thee : and there do thou  
(Woe fall on thee if thou refuse me this !)  
Plunge in his breast this sword.

*Gar.* Oh Heaven !

*Cos.* Be silent.

Thou hast betray'd thy sire, thy lord, thyself :  
This is th' atonement. What ? when I command  
Dar'st thou resist ?

*Gar.* And dost thou stand in need  
Of other hands more infamous for this ?

*Cos.* I have selected thine : let that suffice.

*Gar.* I will first perish.

*Cos.* Say not so ; my hand .

Grasps the sure earnest of thy prompt obedience.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Garcia.*

*Gar.* What looks ! . . . Alas . . . Oh father, hear . . .  
Oh words !

But, of what earnest speaks he ? Through each vein  
I feel an unaccustom'd chillness creep.  
Perhaps he alludes to Julia ? . . . Yes . . . what pledge  
Can vie with her ? Oh Heaven ! . . . What can I do ? ..

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Eleonora, Garcia.*

*Ele.* Son, whither dost thou go ? Ah stay ; to me  
Interpret the mysterious words of Cosmo.  
Hither he hath dispatch'd me to assist thee :  
Wherefore ? Say what has happen'd ? . . .

*Gar.* Oh, my mother ! . . .  
What did he say to thee ?

*Ele.* "Go ; give advice  
"To thy beloved Garcia, now he needs thee :  
"And make him recollect."—Nor added more ;  
But with a countenance more discomposed  
Than ever I beheld in him, pass'd on.  
Now speak ; delay not ; what has happen'd ?

*Gar.* Mother,  
Know'st thou this sword ?

*Ele.* I, at thy father's side,  
Have always seen it hang : and what of this ? . . .

*Gar.* This is an instrument of government :  
Ah, were it Cosmo's only ! Ne'er should I  
Contaminate with it my innocent hand !

But to this right-hand my unnatural father  
Himself consign'd it, and insists that I  
Plunge it by stealth in Salviati's breast.

*Ele.* What do I hear? ... Oh Heaven! ... But  
whence to thee

Commits he such a terrible revenge?

*Gar.* He chuses me, only because I feel  
Pity for Salviati; and because  
I am not yet contaminate with blood;  
Because the daughter, the unhappy daughter,  
Of that unhappy father, I adore.

*Ele.* What say'st thou? Julia!

*Gar.* I love Julia; yes;  
And indiscreetly I myself declared  
That love to Cosmo: hence in him arose  
Th' unnatural wish, worthy of him alone,  
To make the father of the maid beloved  
Die by the lover's hands. Time serves not now  
To say to thee how I was first enthral'd  
By so much beauty join'd to so much virtue;  
Nor, if I told it, would'st thou blame it, mother;  
Now I alone assure thee that I love her,  
And that I will far sooner sacrifice  
My own life than her father's.

*Ele.* Ah! ... my son! ...

Alas! ... what say'st thou? ... and what shall I do?  
Oh fatal love! ... Although I love thee far,  
Far more than aught besides, I cannot praise it.

*Gar.* Julia is ever at thy side, oh mother;  
Thou knowest well, and equally dost prize  
Her rare accomplishments; and thou dost love her  
More than all other damsels of thy court:  
Thence thou may'st well infer that I deserve

At least to be excused, if not commended.  
But, if thou rather wilt, condemn me : never  
Have I displeased thee, mother : I have held  
Thy smallest wish inviolably sacred.  
And I, at least, if I cannot root out  
This love, can moderate its ecstasies.  
I only ask of thee that thou would'st save  
That heavenly and defenceless innocence,  
From Cosmo's pitiless and fatal grasp.  
I wish to save her, not to make her mine.  
Incensed, and loading me with frantic threats,  
Cosmo departed hence : perchance one crime  
Will not suffice to his ferocious heart ;  
Perhaps Julia too . . . oh Heaven ! . . . Ah, mother,  
fly ;

If I was ever dear to thee, go now,  
Watch o'er my love. Who knows ? . . .

*Ele.* Thy love excites  
In thee immoderate fear . . .

*Gar.* All may be fear'd  
From Cosmo's deadly rage : thou yet hast time ;  
Thou hast the remedy ; it now behoves thee  
His fury to delude ; 'twere vain to sooth him.  
As best it may be done, deliver Julia ;  
And meanwhile feign that I am now almost  
Prepared t' obey : time, and nought else, I ask.  
In fine, thou art a mother ; and the love  
Thou bear'st thy son shall animate thy heart.  
Thou oughtest from so horrible a crime  
T' exempt a son ; thou oughtest to deliver  
From unjust violence an innocent maid.  
Thou see'st me now humble myself in tears,  
And supplicate while yet a hope remains :



Woe, if my father goad me to revenge ;  
Woe, if he dare to wreak his rage on her  
In whom alone I live ! Rivers of blood  
Shall be effused to inundate the palace ;  
And this my arm shall shed it. Then no more  
Shall I hear reason ; then no more shall deem  
Myself a son.

*Ele.* Ah calm thyself ; what say'st thou ?  
Thou seest things that are not : far from thee  
Be e'en the thought of such extravagance . . .

*Gar.* Do thou, oh mother, then anticipate  
That which thou canst not afterwards prevent.  
From this severe extremity, to which  
I'm driven by my father, do thou find  
Some method of escape for me, that I  
Be not a traitor.

*Ele.* Yes, son, yes ; but calm  
Thy irritated soul : to him I fly.  
Ah may I change his horrible resolve !  
Julia I will at least in safety place,  
To give thee peace. Meanwhile I interdict  
Thee from attempting aught till I return.

#### SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Garcia.*

*Gar.* If Julia is not safe, I will do nothing.—  
Alas ! what do I hope ? that to cheat Cosmo  
My mother may avail, who bears the marks  
Of apprehension in her every look ?  
Oh, from what father am I sprung ! Alike  
Crafty and cruel, can he be deceived ?  
Much less be moved to pity . . . Yet he will not

Have wreaked his rage upon the timid maid,  
Ere he has learn'd that I refuse to strike  
Th' atrocious blow . . . Shall I consent to it? . . .

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Piero, Garcia.*

*Pi.* Brother, what hast thou done? Alas! . . .

*Gar.* What ails thee?

*Pi.* In truth I now do pity thee sincerely.

*Gar.* Now? . . . What has happened? . . .

*Pi.* Oh unhappy brother!

Cosmo doth threaten thee, and darkly frowns,  
Pronouncing thee a traitor.

*Gar.* Such I am not.

*Pi.* But yet my father is exasperate  
Beyond all bounds. He hath already summon'd  
Into his presence Salviati's daughter,  
Laden with heavy and opprobrious chains.

*Gar.* Oh Heaven! . . . Vile tyrant . . . I will fly . . .

*Pi.* Ah! . . . Where?

*Gar.* To drag her from unworthy chains.

*Pi.* Thou may'st

Drag her to horrid death by thy imprudence.  
Under the penalty of death he gave her  
Into the custody of cruel Geri.

If he, by whomsoever it may be,  
Perceives the smallest action in her favour,  
Geri is bidden instantly to slay her  
With his own hands . . .

*Gar.* We soon shall see . . .

*Pi.* Ah stop! . . .

What would'st thou do?

*Gar.* To slay her? Oh distraction! . . .  
But was he not accosted by my mother? . . .

*Pi.* She came erewhile; but the terrific sentence  
Was executed. She would speak to him;  
But her indignant consort silenced her:  
She wept; but tears he told her were not wanted:  
He said, "To exculpate himself from all,  
"I to thy Garcia have consign'd the means."

*Gar.* Of what, of what, to exculpate myself?  
Being thy son? Indelible that blot.—  
Gave me the means? Thou seest what means: this  
sword,

Which in the breast of wretched Salviati  
I am appointed treacherously to plunge.  
Ah Cosmo, why am I a son of thine?  
Ah, were I not, this sword would then, indeed,  
Be the best means to exculpate myself.  
But against thee I cannot; oh distraction! . . .  
Against myself . . .

*Pi.* What would'st thou do? . . . Desist . . .

*Gar.* Rather than see that much-loved maiden  
dragg'd  
To ignominious death, rather than be  
Polluted with her father's blood, I here  
Would kill myself . . .

*Pi.* Ah pause; . . . listen to me; . . .  
Reflect that Cosmo is unchangeable.  
He, at all risks, wills Salviati's death:  
And if from thee he wills it, by thy death  
Thou sav'st not him; rather reservest him  
For pangs more exquisite: ah, thou well knowest,  
Whether, because defrauded of its means,  
Cosmo's revenge abates. And th' innocent daughter,

Perhaps she too...

*Gar.* Oh Heaven!

*Pi.* But why perhaps?

It is too sure! If thou refuse t' obey,  
Father and daughter he will immolate.

*Gar.* Thou mak'st me shudder with excess of  
horror.

But how can I destroy, and treacherously,  
A just and innocent man? Hither entice  
At night, and under the flagitious mask  
Of simulated amity, a friend,  
The father of the lady I adore?...

*Pi.* Ah! surely such extremity as thine  
Was never heard before; nor are there minds  
So firm, as not to shrink from such a trial.  
But yet what would'st thou? What else canst thou  
do?

Thou only canst accumulate crime on crime.  
Let one alone expire; that were the best...

*Gar.* And shall I live?...

*Pi.* Hear me. He is the culprit  
Who forces thee to such a crime, not thou.—  
But yet I can in part lessen for thee  
The horror of this stratagem, if thou  
Permittest that the messenger be sent  
By me to Salviati in thy name.  
Resolve; resolve at once; and oh! reflect  
In what unutterable agony  
Thy Julia languishes...

*Gar.* Beloved Julia!...

And shall I kill thy father?... No, I cannot...  
Yet, if I slay not him, I murder thee...  
For I can neither perish nor avenge thee,

And scarcely can I save thee!—But I ought,  
Ere I resolve, once more to hear my mother :  
Perchance my grief, my rage, my desperate love,  
May point another path.

*Pi.* Ah no!...

*Gar.* But yet  
If 'tis my fate, that I this horrid crime...  
Hear me : if I return not in an hour  
Hither to thee, it is indeed too true  
That I was forced to chuse to immolate  
The father of my Julia.—Then I leave  
To thee, since thou wilt have it so, the task  
To send the impious messenger of death.

#### ACT THE FOURTH.

##### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Piero, Diego.*

*Di.* Say, what does Garcia in his thoughts re-  
volve?

For like a man whose reason is bereft  
I saw him come, and go, and come again.

*Pi.* Dost thou not know that he...

*Di.* What should I know  
Of him? Thou seest that from the woodland chace  
Weary and breathless I return. I know  
That I bring back a plenteous spoil; nought else.  
But as an arrow darting silently  
And swiftly by me, Garcia towards me cast  
Inflamed and furious looks. Say, what new rage  
Invades his heart?

*Pi.* Ah! 'tis not new : for he

Always avoids, blames, envies, even scorns thee,  
Whenever he can do it. Perhaps to see thee  
Of all thy regal ornaments despoil'd,  
As now thou art; divested of thy sword;  
And in thy aspect rather like to one  
That dwells in forests than a monarch's son,  
Perhaps this excited him to such a mute,  
Though supercilious comment. Evermore  
That which he does not, he condemns in others.

*Di.* 'Tis a propensity, methinks, more royal  
To harass wild beasts in th' adventurous chace,  
Than evermore immured 'mid ponderous volumes,  
Wrapt in soft indolence, to learn to fear.  
His supercilious looks excite my pity.  
But whither goes he in such wond'rous haste?

*Pi.* Great projects he revolves. His father now  
He seeks in haste, now to his mother flies,  
And thus employ'd, with zealous speed improves  
The lucky interval. Diego absent,  
And I excluded from these interviews;  
Thou seest the opportunity for intrigue  
Is too inviting to be overlook'd.  
I know no further: but the guilty friendship  
Of Garcia and Salviati, once  
Call'd treason, now is call'd a slight imprudence:  
And that so oft repeated prate with thee,  
Which once was insolence, with other terms  
Is designated now a youthful fire:  
And that contempt for individual power  
Which he professes openly, I hear  
Now call'd a thoughtless eccentricity.  
Just indignation every day I see  
Arise in Cosmo; but the senile flame

By female artifice is soon extinguish'd.  
In short, this morning Garcia heard himself  
Pronounced a traitor ; and this very day  
(Or ere 'tis closed) he hears himself from all  
Exculpated, defended, and exalted ;  
And even yet, perchance, he may behold  
Himself rewarded.

*Di.* What indeed does that  
Import to us ? Shall I afflict myself  
That Garcia gains once more my father's favour ?  
Perhaps this alone may lead him to reform ?

*Pi.* And am I more invidious than thyself  
Of other men's advantages ? But yet  
Th' imposture grieves me, and e'en more than this  
The fatal and inevitable ruin  
Threatening our race, our father, and thyself.

*Di.* My father ? and myself ? Say, what would  
Garcia ?

What can he ?

*Pi.* He would reign : and may indeed,  
If thou art silent.

*Di.* Reign ? . . . But have I not  
A sword ?

*Pi.* Far different arms he wields. Erewhile,  
A transient wrath against himself inflamed thee ;  
Thou know'st not how to hate, or recollect  
The injuries of others : but, if they  
Cherish them in the bottom of their hearts ;  
If black and fervid anger rankle there,  
Ready at every instant to explode . . .

*Di.* But th' impious contest Cosmo hath not yet  
Consign'd to deep oblivion ? . . .

*Pi.* So I deem ;

But Garcia deems otherwise.

*Di.* But thou,  
Thou seem'st to come to me to stir up strife.  
How can my brother injure me?

*Pi.* Indeed,  
I am the brand of discord 'twixt you both :  
Do thou, abandoning thy judgment, stand  
Securely in thy valour ; I, like thee,  
Might be secure, if I did love thee less.  
Attribute it to thy propitious fate  
That I discover'd his designs in time.  
Now at once thy security and ours  
Compel me to develope them to thee :  
For, had I wish'd t' excite disturbances,  
I had divulged them only to my father :  
But yet I will go there, if thou refuse  
To hear me.

*Di.* What has happen'd then ? Relate.

*Pi.* The silent night with more than usual gloom  
Already is advanced. Within the grot  
Which terminates the hollow avenue,  
Embower'd in shade of lofty cypresses,  
Thither doth Salvati now repair,  
By Garcia bidden, to a guilty council :  
Perchance already he is hidden there,  
And every moment there expects his friend.  
There they've agreed upon to fix the means  
Of final vengeance. I have learn'd the whole  
From him who was their chosen messenger.  
Prayers, menaces, and vigilant espial,  
Much art and bribes, have now disclosed to me  
The horrible mystery : in short . . . But what  
Do I behold ? For once at least I see



Amazement stamp'd on thy intrepid face ! . . .  
Yet that which I affirm to thee is little :  
Do thou be irrefragably convinced  
With thy own ears ; and be thy eyes alone  
The witnesses of my veracity.

*Di.* But what a miscreant is he then ! The day,  
The very day on which my father pardons  
His past offences, new ones he projects.—  
He runs to certain ruin.

*Pi.* But to it  
He first goads us. Thou know'st by Salvati  
Thou art not less detested than thy father.  
Scarcely will Garcia have divulged to him  
That thou advis'dst Cosmo first to slay him,  
Than he . . . I tremble to express it . . . Both  
Are madden'd with resentment : artifice  
To malice will be join'd ; for stratagems  
The time is opportune : . . . and wilt thou be  
Neglectful ? Be so then ; I fly to Cosmo,  
Come what come may.—The method I devise  
To obviate more mischief, to procure  
Deliverance for us all ; and thou dost spurn it.  
My father then shall be resorted to :  
And he, the witness of their trait'rous plot,  
With me shall go to them.

*Di.* Ah no ! desist :  
Think that a man can never be the accuser  
Who holds himself not viler than the accused.  
By what means would'st thou that I thwart the traitor ?  
Speak ; I will do it.

*Pi.* Thou should'st first hear all :  
'Tis easy from detected stratagems  
To extricate oneself : thou may'st alone,

Without the interposition of thy father;  
When thou hast once convicted him of treason,  
Keep, with thy valour, Garcia at bay;  
Inspire his heart with salutary fear;  
And even yet to duty's path restore him.—  
Ah go! already is the hour arrived:  
Now hide thyself within the gloomy grot;  
And there wilt thou hear unexpected things.

*Di.* Thou dost compel me to it; and I yield,  
Although against my will, that to this place  
My father may not be enticed by thee:  
He would inflict a too severe revenge.

*Pi.* Ah yes! I also tremble at the thought:  
Yet 'tis our duty to anticipate  
The ill designs of others... But methinks...  
I hear a noise... it is himself... step softly...  
'Tis Garcia.—Come, enter unseen; make haste.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Piero.*

*Pi.* At length he's safely lodged.—I'll hide myself;  
And listen to discover if I can  
Whether this other doth maintain his purpose.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Garcia.*

*Gar.* Alas! who doth impel my footsteps here?..  
Where am I?... This is most assuredly  
The cave of death. For a most noble combat,  
In truth, oh Garcia, thou preparest thyself.

Oh heaven ! what am I doing ? Innocence,  
 Thou which wert heretofore my only boast,  
 Thou art no longer mine : the impious blow  
 I've pledged myself to strike . . . and shall I strike  
 it ? . . .

In every corner of this gloomy cave  
 I hear a sound of death : and on myself  
 Alone I cannot now that death inflict . . .  
 Oh cruel destiny ! . . . Night's thickest shades  
 Already cover all things ; and 'tis come,  
 Nay, 'tis exceeded, the tremendous hour !—  
 Assuredly Piero did dispatch  
 The messenger of death : why should I doubt ?  
 Did Piero e'er delay to do a thing  
 That might endanger others ? The embassy,  
 Too certainly was sent ! . . . Unhappy friend !  
 Thou with security awaitest me,  
 In the impious cave, destined to be thy tomb . . .  
 Thy tomb ? . . . Shall I destroy thee ? Never, never.  
 Why do I grasp thee, hated sword of Cosmo ?  
 Far from me, cursed instrument ! . . .

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Eleonora, Garcia.*

*Ele.* Oh son ! . . .

*Gar.* Mother, whence comest thou ? To rescue  
 me

From this commanded crime ?

*Ele.* Oh heaven ! To thee

Thy cruel father sends me.

*Gar.* What wills he ?

*Ele.* That I should come, alas ! to ascertain

With these my eyes, if thou prepare thyself  
To obey him. This abominable task  
Belong'd to Piero ; but he found him not ;  
Hence he chose me . . . Alas ! and I to him  
Am instantly commanded to return.  
What shall I say to him ?

*Gar.* That hitherto  
My hands are pure : ah, that my lips were so !  
But, if I promised it, I now refuse  
That promise to fulfil. Go, tell him this . . .

*Ele.* Oh heaven ! Dost thou not know, if I should  
dare  
To repeat this to him, I should expose thee  
To dreadful danger ? He is blind with rage . . .

*Gar.* Let him be so ; and let him murder me ;  
This I expect.

*Ele.* And Julia ?

*Gar.* Oh that name ! . . .

*Ele.* Take pity on her, if thou do refuse it  
Both to thy wretched mother and thyself.

*Gar.* Go then, and say to him, . . . that I obey :  
Meanwhile without delay my Julia rescue . . .

*Ele.* Rescue ! Does Cosmo trust to simple words ?  
He, with his own eyes, here will see the victim.  
Ah son ! it tortures me to goad thee thus  
To an unworthy deed ; . . . but yet, . . . reflect . . .

*Gar.* Is it impossible that Julia then . . .

*Ele.* I dare not tell thee all ; . . . yet, if I'm silent . . .

*Gar.* Speak, mother, speak at once. Thou mak'st  
me tremble.

*Ele.* While I confer with thee, . . . Cosmo himself ..  
Holds o'er the bosom of the trembling maid  
An unsheathed dagger . . .

*Gar.* Oh atrocious sight !  
 Stop, father, stop thy arm ; I will destroy him ; ...  
 I return quickly ; ... stop ; ... thou shalt behold me  
 Swimming in blood ... Where is my sword, my  
                   sword ? ...  
 'Tis here ; I fly ... Oh father ... stop ... I fly.

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Piero.*

*Pi.* Oh thou disciple of romantic virtue,  
 Dost thou too tread expediency's broad path ?  
 It were indeed a miracle, hadst thou  
 Belied the character of all our race !—  
 Now go, and plunge thou in a guiltless breast  
 Thy reeking dagger.—What will thence ensue ?  
 I do not know ; but be it what it may,  
 The inextricable knot, which chance and art  
 Have emulously twined, the sword alone  
 Can disentangle.—Let us hear ... But what ?  
 Do I hear Garcia return already ?  
 He returns quickly. Should he have repented ?  
 It is not, is not so ; for I behold him  
 Come like a man whom conscious guilt pursues.

## SCENE THE SIXTH.

*Garcia, Piero.*

*Gar.* Who art thou ? ... Who ... presents himself  
                   to me ...  
 Upon the thresholds of mortality ?  
*Pi.* Thy brother, Piero ...  
*Gar.* The son of Cosmo ?

*Pi.* And thou, art thou not so?

*Gar.* I am so, . . . yes . . .

Now that I am a traitor.

*Pi.* Hast thou slain him?

*Gar.* Dost thou not see it, by my steps, . . . my  
gestures, . . .

My faltering voice, . . . the unaccustomed fear . . .

Which smites my heart?

*Pi.* I pitied thee before, . . .

And now much more.—But thou hast saved thy Julia.

*Gar.* Oh heaven! who knows if yet my father . . .

*Pi.* Hence

I fly to him. Soon as I bring to him

Proof that by thy hand Salviati fell,

Julia will be in safety.

*Gar.* Proof? Behold

My sword; it trickles yet with smoking blood.

Go, take it to him . . . but if it should meet

His daughter's eyes, . . . oh heaven! . . .

*Pi.* But art thou sure

Thou tookest aim effectively? Fell he

At the first blow? And spake he not?

*Gar.* Fear'st thou

That yet he is alive? Or doth it please thee

To hear from me the atrocious narrative,

To fill thy bosom with malignant joy?

Thou shalt be satisfied: and tell it thou

To my unnatural father.—

Soon as I enter'd in the cave I heard,

And seem'd to see, my victim groping there,

Who had preceded me: I quickly raised

My arm to smite him; but my arm dropped down . .

Already I retreated; when, methought,

A shriek from Julia, like a shriek of death,  
 I heard, and spite of me it drew me back.  
 Hearing a foot-fall, Salvati rush'd  
 Meanwhile towards the entrance, and approach'd  
 me.

At once I planted, even to the hilt,  
 The execrable dagger in his heart . . .  
 One sigh alone, one bursting sigh of death,  
 Falling, he breathed . . . Oh horrible to tell! . . .  
 I felt myself aspersed with spouting blood:  
 A death-like chillness crept through all my veins; . .  
 And scarcely I restrain'd myself from falling  
 Upon the bleeding corse . . . Wretch that I am! . . .  
 Groping with trembling hands, I scarcely gain'd  
 The mouth of that abominable tomb . . .  
 Hast heard enough?—Dost thou exult in hearing?

*Pi.* Why should'st thou wrong me thus?—Fortune  
 at least,

In one respect, has been to thee propitious,  
 That I alone beheld thee quit this cave.—  
 My father will hereafter well know how  
 To give what colour serves his purpose best  
 To this calamity. Time cancels all things;  
 Even affliction yields at length to time.  
 If thus my father will'd, the guilt is his:  
 Thanks, not dishonour, thou should'st reap from it.  
 Besides, that he especially will wish  
 For ever to conceal it.—Calm thyself:  
 Light is a crime that ne'er will be divulged.

*Gar.* Rewards to me!—death now is my desert.  
 Where shall I hide myself? This guiltless blood,  
 With which I am polluted and besmear'd,  
 What could e'er cleanse it? Not my useless tears,

Nor the last drop of all my blood could do it.—  
 Go thou to Cosmo; yield him back his sword;  
 Do thou receive his recompenses. Thou  
 The cruel messenger of death didst send:  
 Thou didst exult, perfidious brother! thou,  
 That I became, as thou thyself art, base  
 And infamous.—Thou art the real son  
 Of Cosmo.—Go; this instant leave me.—Where,  
 Where can I ever from myself escape?...  
 Where shall I hide myself?... Ah! how shall I  
 Sustain the glances of Diego now,  
 Now that he's justified in calling me  
 A traitor?—of Diego, who, though dear  
 To you, had never been himself a traitor?...  
 Oh rage!... Oh irrecoverable shame!...

*Pi.* Thou canst not instantaneously resume  
 Collected thoughts... Appease thy just regrets:  
 Meanwhile I will precede thee to thy father.  
 I hope thy crime will always be unknown  
 Both to Diego and to all mankind.

*Gar.* All men shall know it: such a punishment  
 I have already to myself prescribed,  
 That false suspicion may not fall on others.  
 Obtain alone that I, on my arrival,  
 Find that unhappy Julia restored  
 To liberty... It afterwards depends  
 On me to inflict just vengeance on my crime.



## ACT THE FIFTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cosmo, Garcia.*

*Cos.* Advance, nearer advance. But how! thou tremblest!

Dost thou deserve reward or punishment?  
What hast thou done? This instant tell me all.

*Gar.* Before to-day didst thou e'er see me tremble?

Thou oughtest to be well aware how fear  
Ever accompanies a guilty conscience.  
My brief address, oh Cosmo, hear. At length  
I have, thou knowest, with my dastard hand  
Accomplish'd thy magnanimous revenge,  
And I was taught to expect that Julia's safety  
Would recompense the murderer of her father.  
For thou erewhile didst generously promise  
That I should purchase by the blood of one  
The freedom of another innocent.

Ah! tell me, hast thou then at last released  
Julia from chains? Shall that most wretched maid  
Life and security at least retain?

*Cos.* Not only I release her, but with thee  
Will join her, if thou hast perform'd the deed.

*Gar.* Join her with me! oh crime And thinkest  
thou

That I am so consummately thy son  
I am thy son indeed, but not so much.  
If I have been a traitor, heaven know wherefore..

*Cos.* Thou better know'st thyself. But whence are  
                   now  
 Thy mad audacity, thy pride, thy threats,  
 In thee redoubled?

*Gar.* Whence! Defiled with blood,  
 I am the instrument of thy commands,  
 And should I not be sworn with haughty thoughts?  
 Since I am the most guilty, am I not  
 Now the most dear to thee of all thy sons?

*Cos.* Miscreant! ere long and thou indeed wilt  
                   tremble...

*Gar.* I trembled while I yet was innocent:  
 Now am I reckless from despairing guilt.  
 I only ask of thee that thou would'st now  
 Fulfil thy promise. My own destiny  
 I have ere now fix'd, and for ever fix'd.

*Cos.* More fix'd perchance my will. She ne'er  
                   shall be  
 Released, if she is not thy consort first:  
 Or thine or in eternal chains. Shall I  
 Suffer her ancient rancour, her new wish  
 To avenge her father's murder, to be brought  
 A wedding dowry to another spouse?  
 Her's thou alone...

*Gar.* Ah me! what have I done? ...  
 Oh what art thou? ... No ... never ...

*Cos.* Cease; this ought  
 Not to afflict thee now: thou'rt call'd upon  
 First to convince me that with thy own hand  
 Thou hast slain Salviati.—Know'st thou this?  
 What proofs of it canst thou adduce to me?

*Gar.* What proofs! Oh guilty grief! doth it not  
                   then

Suffice to be a miscreant? Is there need  
Also to triumph in committed crimes?  
Ah, see my guilt upon my face engraved,  
See it exultingly. My desperate deeds,  
My eyes, my gestures, and the tones of death  
Most audible in every word I utter,  
Do not they all express it? And the blood  
With which I am defiled from head to foot,  
Yet crimson, smoking yet?

*Cos.* I see that blood:

But whose it is I have not yet discover'd.  
I only have obtain'd entire conviction  
That it is not the blood that I demanded.

*Gar.* Oh rage! and doubt?... Then thither go  
thyself:

Plant thou thy feet within the horrible cave;  
That wretched victim in a lake of blood  
There wilt thou see extended. Go, and feed  
On the dire spectacle; go satisfy  
Not thy sight only, but thy other senses:  
Touch with thy hand the gaping wound of death;  
Feed on his quivering heart; and, tyger, drink  
In copious draughts its blood; thy regal rage  
Pour out on that exanimated breast.  
Once, twice, and four times, nay, a thousand times,  
Plunge in that form that can contend no more  
Thy valorous dagger: there make noble proof  
Of all thy prowess,—sceptred hero—there;  
Thou hast no other place.—Unheard-of death!  
Unheard-of pangs! I am a parricide,  
The son of Cosmo, I; and innocent  
That Cosmo would account me!...

*Cos.* Who denies

That thou'rt a miscreant, who? Thou hast, I think,  
Inflicted death; but not on him whose death,  
From the complexion of these perilous times,  
Is no less indispensable than just.  
Thou art, but not of any foe of mine,  
A murderer: more I know not; but ere long  
I shall know all; quickly I shall behold  
With my own eyes...

*Gar.* Hast thou not seen Piero?  
And said he not to thee that Salviati,  
By his contrivance, enter'd first the cave?...

*Cos.* Yes, yes, Piero came, and said to me  
That Salviati in that cave this night  
Hath never enter'd, nor e'en thought to do it.  
Thither I now repair, where thou hast stain'd  
The soil with blood. If he has not fall'n there,  
Tremble thyself. My fury, destined all  
To wreak itself on that devoted head,  
Who knows, perchance... to-day... may elsewhere  
...fall...

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Garcia.*

*Gar.* What do I hear? Oh heaven! that in that  
cave

The feet of Salviati have not enter'd!  
Piero says so! and to Cosmo says it!  
Oh horrible and fatal mystery!  
Whose is that blood then that I thus have shed?  
Oh how I shudder with affright!... But yet,  
What other murder were a crime like this?  
Ah! were it true that this my impious hand

Had slain all others rather than himself! . . .  
 Whom hast thou then destroy'd? . . . I well remember,  
 That when I issued breathless from the cave  
 Piero stood before me suddenly,  
 With hesitating looks . . . What did he say?  
 Oh, well I recollect; . . . he was disturb'd,  
 And manifested great anxiety  
 To hear my narrative : for me he waited :  
 His words were broken, doubtful, apprehensive . . .  
 Nor Salviati's danger, nor my own,  
 Could ever wake in him such agony . . .  
 Perhaps he himself within that grot had laid  
 Some snare for my destruction! . . . Yet the man  
 Whom I transfix'd appear'd to me unarm'd.  
 I was the first to assault him : he spake not . . .  
 What boots it? . . . More obscure than threefold  
 night,  
 Who, except Cosmo or Piero, can  
 Unravel thee, thou horrid mystery?  
 But more and more I feel myself o'erwhelm'd  
 With unaccustom'd fear : within my heart  
 An unknown terror rises.—Oh suspense,  
 Oh thou the chief and worst of ills, no more,  
 No more thy torments will I thus embosom!  
 Thither I go ; thither I go myself,  
 To see what death . . .

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Eleonora, Garcia.*

*Ele.* Oh son ! what hast thou done ?  
 Fly hence . . . ah fly ! . . .  
*Gar.* Fly ! . . . I ! . . . and wherefore ? whither ?

*Ele.* Fly, fly, oh son! . . .

*Gar.* Ah no! I will not fly.

My father, on my ruin bent, contrived  
The crime, whate'er it be. I fly not, no.

*Ele.* Ah! if thou carest for thyself, for us,  
For me, withdraw thyself without delay  
From the first violence of thy father's fury.

*Gar.* Fury! what have I done? and what can add  
Force to his natural ferocity?

*Ele.* Hear'st thou?—On every side with piercing  
cries

The palace echoes.—What canst thou have done?  
Preceded by a hundred torches, Cosmo  
Enraged within the grotto ran; in arms  
Others pursued him: all at once cried out  
The name of Garcia. What canst thou have done?  
Thou know'st him well; ah fly!—Oh heaven! he  
comes!

What stunning clamour! Didst thou hear the cry?  
"Treason! and to the traitor!" . . . Oh my son!

*Gar.* The treason is from Cosmo; Cosmo is  
The traitor; but I'm doom'd to be the victim;  
I have deserved it. Let him come; I fear not.

*Ele.* Ah wretched me! with sword unsheath'd . . .  
At least  
Shelter in these my arms . . .

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Eleonora, Garcia, Cosmo, with naked Sword, Guards  
with Torches and Arms.*

*Cos.* On every side

Close up the avenues.—Where is the traitor?  
Slunk to his mother's arms. In vain...

*Gar.* From thence  
I've freed myself. What wouldst thou with me?  
What have I done?

*Ele.* Pity! thou art a father...

*Cos.* I was so once.

*Ele.* Oh heavens!...

*Gar.* What have I done?

*Cos.* Askest thou that, when thou hast slain Diego?

*Ele.* My son!...

*Gar.* My brother!...

*Cos.* Lady, get thee hence...

*Ele.* Yet he's thy son...

*Gar.* Behold my breast...

*Ele.* Ah! pause...

*Cos.* Die! die!

*Ele.* Thy son!... Oh blow!\*...

*Cos.* Impious! is he

To thee a son, he who hath slain a son?

*Gar.* We all... are impious... Never did the day  
Visit a more flagitious race than ours.—

Father... I swear to thee... I knew it not...

If... by this hand of mine... Diego fell,

Piero... plann'd... the execrable scheme.

Father... I... die... and dying... I invoke...

The heavens... to witness... that... I speak the  
truth.

*Cos.* Beloved Diego! I lose thee!.. Oh heavens!..

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\* She falls in a swoon.

And in the life-blood of another son  
I've bathed this dagger ! In the arms of death  
My consort lies : . . . on my remaining son  
Frightful suspicions fall . . . Oh state ! . . . To whom  
Can I now turn ? . . . Alas ! . . . In whom confide ?



# SAUL.

## A TRAGEDY.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SAUL.	AHIMELECH.
JONATHAN.	MICHAL.
DAVID.	<i>Soldiers of the Israelites.</i>
ABNER.	<i>Soldiers of the Philistines.</i>

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SCENE,—The Camp of the Israelites in Gilboa.

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### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*David.*

*Da.* Here, God omnipotent, wilt thou that I  
Restrain that course to which thou hast impell'd me ?  
Here will I stand ?—These are Gilboa's mountains,  
Now forming Israel's camp, exposed in front  
To the impious Philistine. Ah, that I  
Might fall to-day beneath the enemy's sword !  
But death awaits me from the hand of Saul.  
Ah cruel and infatuated Saul,  
Who, without giving him a moment's respite,  
Through caverns, and o'er cliffs, dost chase thy  
champion.  
And, notwithstanding David formerly  
Was thy defender : all thy confidence

In me hadst thou reposed ; me didst thou raise  
 To honour's pinnacle ; and as a spouse  
 I was by thee selected for thy daughter . . .  
 But, as an inauspicious dowry, thou  
 Didst ask of me, dissevered from thy foes,  
 A hundred heads : and I have brought of them  
 To thee, faithfully brought, a double harvest . . .  
 But Saul, I clearly see, in thought is stricken ;  
 Long hath he been so ; to an evil spirit  
 His God abandons his perverted mind :  
 Oh Heaven ! Distracted mortals, what are we  
 If God forsake us ?—Night, do thou soon yield  
 Thy shades to the glad sun ; for he to-day  
 The witness of a generous enterprise  
 Is destined to shine forth. Gilboa, thou  
 Shalt, to the latest ages, be renown'd ;  
 They shall record of thee, that David here  
 Himself surrendered to ferocious Saul.—  
 March forth, oh Israel, from thy peaceful tents ;  
 March forth from them, oh King : I challenge you  
 To-day to witness, if I yet am versed  
 In military arts. And march thou forth,  
 Impious Philistine ; march thou forth, and see  
 Whether my sword have yet the power to smite.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Jonathan, David.*

*Jon.* What voice hath caught my ears ? I hear a  
           voice  
 Skilful to penetrate my heart.  
*Da.* Who comes ? . . .  
 Oh that the dawn would rise ! Fain would not I

Like a base fugitive present myself...

*Jon.* What! ho! Who art thou? Near the royal tent,

What is thy business? Speak.

*Da.* 'Tis Jonathan...

Courage.—A son of war, and Israel's stay,

Am I. Philistia trembles at my name.

*Jon.* What do I hear? Ah! David could alone Thus answer.

*Da.* Jonathan...

*Jon.* My brother... David!

*Da.* Oh joy!... To thee...

*Jon.* And can it then be true?

Thou in Gilboa? Fear'st thou not my father?  
I tremble for thee!...

*Da.* Wherefore speak'st thou thus?

Death present, in the fight, a thousand times

Have I beheld and braved: for a long time

I have since fled thy father's unjust rage;

But to the valiant fear alone is death.

No longer now I fear: with mighty danger.

The monarch, and his people, are encompass'd:

Shall David be the recreant meanwhile

To skulk securely in untrodden forests?

While imminent o'er you the weapons hang

Of the unfaithful, shall I take a thought

Of my own safety? I come here to die;

But, like a hero, in my country's cause,

Amid the clash of arms, and in the camp,

And for that very ill-requiting Saul

Who now pursues me with the cry of death.

*Jon.* Oh virtue, worthy David! God's elect  
Thou art assuredly. That God hath sent

His angel as his minister to guard thee,  
Who with such superhuman thoughts inspires  
Thy lofty heart.—Yet to the monarch's presence  
How shall I bring thee? He believes, or feigns,  
That thou art enroll'd among his enemies;  
And taxes thee with treachery and rebellion.

*Da.* Alas! too forcibly he tempted me  
To seek a refuge 'mid the foes of Israel.  
But if those foes impugn him with their arms,  
I war with them, for him, till they're subdued.  
Then let him afterwards repeat to me  
My ancient recompense,—his hate and death.

*Jon.* Unhappy father! There are who deceive  
him.

Perfidious Abner, a dissembling friend,  
Is ever at his side. The ghastly demon,  
That hath possess'd, and subjugates his heart,  
At least bestows on him a transient respite;  
But Abner's unrelenting artifice  
Never forsakes him. He alone is heard,  
He only; he alone is loved. To Saul,  
Like a malignant parasite, he paints  
All that surpasses his frail excellence,  
As dangerous and uncertain. With thy father,  
In vain thy wife and I...

*Da.* My wife! Loved name?  
Where is my faithful Michal, where? Does she,  
Spite of her cruel father, love me yet?

*Jon.* Love thee, say'st thou?... She, too, is in  
the camp...

*Da.* Oh Heaven! Shall I behold her then? Oh  
joy!  
How came she in the camp?...

*Jon.* Her father felt  
Pity for her ; alone he would not leave her,  
A victim to her sorrow, in the palace :  
And even she, though always sad, affords  
To him some comfort. Ah ! since thy departure,  
Our house, indeed, has been the house of tears.

*Da.* Beloved spouse ! Thy renovating look  
Will banish every thought of past distress ;  
Banish all thoughts of suffering to come.

*Jon.* Ah, hadst thou seen her ! . . . Scarcely had  
she lost thee,  
When every ornament her grief disdain'd :  
With loathsome ashes her dishevell'd hair ;  
With desolation, pallidness, and tears,  
And leanness, was her countenance disfigured ;  
Profound mute grief sat on her trembling heart.  
A thousand times each day she prostrate fell  
Before her father ; and with sobs exclaim'd,  
“ Restore my David, thou who gav'st him to me.”  
Her garments thence she rent ; and, weeping, bathed  
Her father's hand, that even he shed tears.  
Who could refrain ?—Abner alone ; and he  
Insisted that, half dead e'en as she was,  
She should be sever'd from her father's feet.

*Da.* Oh sight ! Oh what dost thou recount to me ?

*Jon.* Would it were not the truth ! . . . At thy departure  
Peace, glory, enterprise in arms, departed.  
The hearts of Israel are benumb'd with dread ;  
Philistia's sons, who heretofore appear'd  
Mere striplings when we fought beneath thy banners,  
Now, since no more we have thee for our leader,  
With port colossal stalk before our eyes :

Pent in this valley, mindless of ourselves,  
Threats, insults, and derision, we endure.  
Why should we wonder ? Israel hath at once  
In David lost her judgment and her sword.  
I, who, pursuing thy heroic steps,  
Elate with conscious glory trod the camp,  
Now feel my right-hand impotent to smite.  
Now that so often I behold thee, David,  
Exposed to hardships, sever'd from my side,  
Pursued by danger, now no more I seem  
To combat for my monarch, and my father,  
My wife, my children ; far more dear to me  
Art thou than country, father, wife, and sons . . .

*Da.* Thou lovest me, and more than I deserve :  
May God reward thy love . . .

*Jon.* The God of justice,  
The swift rewarder of true excellence,  
He is with thee. By dying Samuel wert thou  
In Rama recognized ; the sacred lips  
Of the anointed prophet, by whose means  
My sire was crown'd, great marvels prophesied  
Of thee in after times : hence, in my sight  
Thy life is no less sacred than beloved.  
Th' insidious perils of the court alone  
For thee alarm me ; not those of the camp.  
But death, and treachery, death's harbinger,  
Round these pavilions hover evermore :  
Death, Abner gives it ; often Saul commands it.  
Ah, David ! hide thyself ; until, at least,  
The mountain echo with the warlike trumpet.  
To-day I deem that we shall be compell'd  
To meet our foes.

*Da.* And shall a valorous deed

Be like a scheme of guilt by stealth transacted?  
Saul shall behold me ere I meet my foes.  
I bring with me what must confound; what must  
Reform the hardest of all harden'd hearts,  
I bring; and first the fury of the king,  
Then that of hostile swords, I will confront.—  
What canst thou say, oh king, if I to thee  
Bend, as thy servant, my submissive brows?  
I who, the husband of thy daughter, ask  
Pardon of thee for ne'er committed faults:  
Thy ancient champion I; who in the jaws  
Of mortal danger, as thy comrade, shield,  
Or victim, offer now myself to thee.—  
The sacred old man dying greeted me  
In Rama, and address'd me like a father;  
And in my arms expired. As his own son  
He formerly loved Saul: but what reward  
Had he for this? The holy, dying man,  
Enjoin'd my love and fealty to the king,  
Not less than blind obedience to my God.  
His latest words shall be, e'en till I die,  
Indelibly engraven on my heart:  
“ Ah, wretched Saul! if thou art not more wise,  
“ The wrath of the Most High will fall upon thee.”  
This Samuel said to me.—My Jonathan,  
Fain would I see thee from the just revenge  
Of Heaven exempt: and thou, I trust, shall be:  
And so we all shall be; and Saul, who yet  
May pardon seek, and reconciliation gain.  
Ah woe, if th' everlasting send his bolt  
Of vengeance from the gaping firmament!  
Thou know'st, that often in the fierce career  
Of his retributory punishments,

He hath involved the guiltless with the guilty.  
 His irresistible, impetuous flash  
 On earth rebounds, extirpates, and dissolves,  
 With the infected reprobated plant,  
 The flowers, the fruits, the foliage of the rest.

*Jon.* David can, with his God, do much for Saul.  
 Oft in the visions of the night I've seen thee,  
 And so sublime in look, that at thy feet  
 Prostrate I've fallen.—More I shall not say;  
 Nor more should'st thou to me. Long as I live,  
 I swear, that sword of Saul shall ne'er descend  
 To injure thee, no never. But, oh Heaven!  
 How can I screen thee from vile stratagems? ...  
 Here, 'mid the pleasures of the costly banquet,  
 Here, 'mid th' accordance of bewitching sounds,  
 Is poison oft imbibed in faithless gold.  
 Ah! who from this can guard thee?

*Da.* Israel's God,  
 If I deserve deliverance; not a host,  
 If I deserve destruction.—But inform me,  
 Can I now see my wife before my father?  
 Till the dawn breaks I would not enter there...

*Jon.* On downy plumes doth she await the day?  
 Before the dawn she duly comes to me  
 To weep thy absence; and together here  
 We put up prayers to God for our sick father...  
 Behold! a form in white not far from us  
 Gleams indistinctly: perhaps it is she;  
 A little step aside, and listen to her;  
 But if it be another, do not now,  
 I pray thee, shew thyself.

*Da.* I will obey thee.



## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Michal, Jonathan.*

*Mi.* Long hated night, wilt thou ne'er disappear? . . .

But doth the sun, indeed, for me arise  
The harbinger of joy? Ah wretched me!  
For I in everlasting darkness pine!—  
Hast thou, my brother, left thy bed the earliest?  
Yet, certainly, my frame, that never rests,  
Was most exhausted. But how can I rest  
On easy pillows, while on the hard earth,  
Banish'd, a fugitive, within the dens  
Of cruel beasts, and watch'd by ambush'd foes,  
My David lies? Ah, father, fiercer far  
Than ravening monsters of the wilderness!  
Hard-hearted Saul! Thou takest from thy child  
Her husband, and thou takest not her life?—  
Hear me, my brother, here no more I tarry:  
'Twill be a noble deed if thou go with me:  
But if thou go not, I alone will venture  
His footsteps to retrace. I am resolved  
To find my husband, or to suffer death.

*Jon.* Delay a little while; and dry thy tears:  
Perhaps our David will come to Gilboa . . .

*Mi.* What say'st thou? Can he e'er approach  
the place  
Which Saul inhabits? . . .

*Jon.* David will be drawn,  
Drawn irresistibly by his fond heart,  
And his unswerving constancy, t' approach  
The place where Jonathan and Michal dwell.

Dost thou not think that his prevailing love  
Can bid defiance to the power of fear?  
And would'st thou wonder if he dared come hither?

*Mi.* Oh, I should tremble for his life ... But yet  
The seeing him would make me ...

*Jon.* And if he  
Fear'd nothing? ... and should he with arguments  
Defend his vent'rous enterprise?—The king,  
Less terrible in his adversity  
Than in prosperity, bewilder'd stands,  
His powers mistrusting; this thou know'st full well.  
Since the invincible right-hand of David  
For him disperses not yon hostile ranks,  
Saul fears; but, arrogant, he speaks it not.  
Each of us in his face can well discern  
That hopes of victory are not in his heart.  
Perhaps this moment he would see thy spouse.

*Mi.* Yes, it is true perhaps; but he is far; ...  
Ah! where? ... and in what state? ...

*Jon.* More than thou thinkest  
He is near to thee.

*Mi.* Heavens! ... why mock me thus? ...

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*David, Michal, Jonathan.*

*Da.* Thy spouse is at thy side.

*Mi.* Oh voice! ... oh sight! ...  
I cannot speak for joy!—Supreme amazement! ...  
And is it true that I at last embrace thee? ...

*Da.* Beloved wife! ... Hard has my absence  
been! ...  
Death, if I'm doom'd to meet with thee to-day,

By all that love me, and by all I love,  
 I am at least surrounded. Better die  
 At once, than languish on in solitude  
 A weary life, where thou by none art loved,  
 And where thou lovest none. Thou thirsty sword  
 Of Saul, I here expect thee ; take my life ;  
 Here will my eyes at least be closed in death  
 By my beloved wife ; my limbs composed ;  
 And bathed by her with tears of real grief.

*Mi.* My David ! . . . Thou at once the source and  
 end

Of all my hopes, ah may thy coming here  
 To me be joyful ! God, who rescued thee  
 From such prodigious oft-repeated dangers,  
 Restores thee not to us in vain to-day . . .  
 Oh, with what strength thy sight alone inspires me !  
 So much I trembled for thee when remote,  
 Almost I cease to tremble for thee now . . .  
 But what do I behold ? In what uncouth  
 And savage garment wrapt, the dawn of day  
 Displays thee to my eyes ? My long'd-for cham-  
 pion,

How art thou stripp'd of every ornament ?  
 No more that robe of gilded purple shades  
 Thy limbs majestic, which these hands of mine  
 Embroider'd for thy use. So indigent,  
 Who would suppose thou wert the monarch's son ?  
 Thou seem'st a vulgar warrior, and no more  
 By thy accoutrements.

*Da.* We are in the camp ;  
 Not in the centre of th' effeminate court :  
 The rustic cassock, and the sharpen'd sword,  
 Are most befitting here. I am resolved

To-day once more in the Philistines' blood  
My garments to impurple. Thou, meanwhile,  
Rely with me on Israel's mighty God,  
Who from destruction can deliver me  
If I deserve not death.

*Jon.* Behold, the day  
Is fully now reveal'd : to linger here  
Thou canst not with impunity persist.  
Although, perchance, thou comest opportunely,  
Still it behoves thee to advance with caution.—  
Each morn we are accustom'd at this hour  
To meet our father. We will scrutinize  
How he to-day is govern'd and possess'd  
By his distemper'd humour : by degrees  
We will prepare him, if occasion smiles,  
For thy reception ; and will obviate,  
That no one first to him malignantly  
Report thy reappearance. Thou, meanwhile,  
Keep thyself separate, lest any one  
Should recognize thee here, and circumvent thee ;  
And Abner even cause thee to be slain.  
Lower the visor of thy helmet ; mix  
Among the undistinguish'd warriors,  
And, unobserved, await till I return  
To thee, or send for thee . . .

*Mi.* Among the warriors  
How can my David be conceal'd ? What eye  
Darts from beneath the morion like his ?  
Who wields a sword that may with his compare ?  
And whose arms clang with such a martial sound ?  
Ah no ! my love, 'twere better thou wert hid  
Till I return to thee. Ah wretched me !  
Scarce found, must I surrender thee already ?

But only for an instant; after that,  
Never, no never, will I leave thee more.  
Yet first would I see thee conceal'd in safety.  
Behold! dost thou not see a spacious grot  
In the recesses of that gloomy wood?  
There oft have I invoked thee, from the world  
Retired, and sigh'd for thee, and thought on thee;  
There with my bitter tears have I bedew'd  
The rugged stones: in this conceal thyself,  
Till the fit time come for discovering thee.

*Da.* In all things, Michal, I would yield to thee.  
Go in implicit trust: I am impell'd  
By a sure instinct, and at random act not;  
I love you both; for your sakes do I live;  
And in Jehovah only I confide.

## ACT THE SECOND.

### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Saul, Abner.*

*Sa.* This dawn how splendid! Th' universal sun  
Arises not wrapt in a bloody shroud;  
He seems to promise a propitious day.—  
Oh, my past years! where now are ye all fled?  
Saul never from his martial bed, till now,  
Rose in the camp, without the certain trust  
That, ere at eve his pillow he resumed,  
He should be victor.

*Ab.* Wherefore now, oh king,  
Dost thou despair? Hast thou not heretofore  
Routed the squadrons of Philistia's host?  
Abner assures thee, that, as to this fight,

Thou com'st more tardily, thence shalt thou reap  
From its result unprecedented fame.

*Sa.* Oh, Abner, with what different eyes do youth  
And hoary age contemplate the events  
Of human life. When with a well-knit arm  
I grasp'd this ponderous and gnarled spear,  
Which now I scarcely sway, I ill conceived  
The possibility of self-mistrust . . .

But I have now not only lost my youth . . .  
Ah! were th' invincible right-hand of God  
E'en yet with me! . . . or were with me at least  
David, my champion! . . .

*Ab.* What then are we?  
Perhaps without him we no longer conquer?  
If I thought that, I never would unsheathe  
My sword again, except to pierce my heart.  
David, who is the first and only cause  
Of all thy misadventures . . .

*Sa.* Thou'rt deceived.—  
All my calamities may be referr'd  
To a more terrible cause . . . And what? Would'st  
thou

Conceal from me the horror of my state?  
Ah! were I not a father, as I am,  
Alas! too certainly, of much-loved children, . . .  
Would I have now life, victory, or the throne? . . .  
I should already, and a long time since,  
Headlong have cast myself 'mid hostile swords:  
I should already, thus at least, at once  
Have closed the horrible life that I drag on.  
How many years have now past, since a smile  
Was seen to play upon my lips? My children,

Whom still I love so much, if they caress me,  
For the most part inflame my heart to rage . . .  
Impatient, fierce, incensed, and turbulent,  
I am a burthen to myself and others ;  
In peace I wish for war, in war for peace :  
Poison conceal'd I drink in every cup,  
In every friend I see an enemy ;  
The softest carpets of Assyria seem  
Planted with thorns to my unsolaced limbs ;  
My transient sleep is agonized with fear ;  
Each dream with imaged terrors that distract me.  
Why should I add to this dark catalogue ?  
Who would believe it ? The sonorous trumpet  
Speaks to my ears in an appalling voice ;  
And fills the heart of Saul with deep dismay.  
Thou seest clearly that Saul's tottering house  
Is desolate, bereft of all its splendour ;  
Thou seest that God hath cast me off for ever.  
And thou thyself (too well thou know'st the truth)  
Dost sometimes, as thou art, appear to me  
My kinsman, champion, and my real friend,  
The leader of my armies, the support  
Of my renown ; and sometimes dost appear  
The interested minion of a court,  
Hostile, invidious, crafty, and a traitor.

*Ab.* Now, Saul, that thou hast thus regain'd thy  
reason,

Do thou, I pray thee, to thy mind recall  
Each past transaction ! Art thou not aware  
That all the wounds of thy afflicted heart  
From Rama spring ; yea, from the dwelling spring  
Of Rama's many prophets. Who to thee  
First dared to say, that God had cast thee off ?

Th' audacious, turbulent, and crafty seer,  
 Th' ambitious, doting priest, whose palsyng words  
 His scycophantic worshippers repeat.  
 The royal wreath, which he thought his, he saw  
 With jealous eyes glittering upon thy brows.  
 Already he accounted it entwined  
 Around his hoary locks; when lo! the voice,  
 Th' unanimous, acclamatory voice,  
 Of Israel's people, to the wind dispersed  
 His wishes, and a warrior king preferred.  
 This is thy crime, this only. Hence, when thou  
 Ceasedst to be subordinate to him,  
 He ceased to call thee the elect of God.  
 This, this alone at first disturb'd thy reason;  
 And David's hierophantic eloquence  
 The injury completed. He in arms  
 Was valiant, I deny it not; but still  
 He was implicitly the tool of Samuel,  
 And fitter for the altar than the camp:  
 In arm a warrior, but in heart a priest.  
 Of every adventitious ornament  
 Be truth divested; thou dost know the truth.  
 I from thy blood am sprung; what constitutes  
 Thy glory, constitutes my glory too:  
 But David, no, can never raise himself,  
 If first he tread not Saul beneath his feet.

Sa. David? . . . I hate him . . . But yet I to him  
 Have yielded as a consort my own daughter . . .  
 Ah! thou canst never know.—That self-same voice,  
 Imperative and visionary voice,  
 Which as a youth my nightly slumbers broke,  
 When I in privacy obscurely lived  
 Far from the throne, and all aspiring thoughts,



For sundry nights hath that same voice been heard  
In menacing, denunciatory tones ;  
Like the deep murmur of the stormy waves,  
Thundering repulsively, to me it cried,—  
“ Depart, depart, oh Saul.” . . . The sacred aspect,  
The venerable aspect of the prophet,  
Which I had seen in dreams before he had  
Made manifest that God had chosen me  
For Israel’s king, that Samuel, in a dream,  
Now with far different aspect I behold.  
I, from a hollow, deep, and horrible vale,  
Behold him sitting on a radiant mount :  
David is humbly prostrate at his feet :  
The holy prophet on his forehead pours  
The consecrated oil : with th’ other hand  
Stretch’d to my head, a hundred cubits length,  
He snatches from my brow the royal crown,  
And would replace it on the brow of David :  
But, would’st thou think it ? David prostrate falls,  
With piteous gesture, at the prophet’s feet,  
Refusing to receive it ; and he weeps,  
And cries, and intercedes so fervently,  
That he refits it on my head at last . . .  
—Oh spectacle !—Oh David, generous David !  
Then thou art yet obedient to thy king ?  
My son ? my faithful subject ? and my friend ? . . .  
Distraction ! . . . Would’st thou take from me my  
crown ?  
Thou, who dared’st do it, insolent old man,  
Tremble . . . Who art thou ? . . . Let him die at once  
Who e’en conceived the thought.—Alas, alas !  
I rave like one distracted ! . . .  
*Ab.* Let him die ;

Let David die alone : and with him vanish  
Dreams, terrors, omens, and distresses.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Jonathan, Michal, Saul, Abner.*

*Jon.* Peace  
Be with my king.

*Mi.* And God be with my father.

*Sa.* Grief always is with me.—I rose to-day  
Before my custom'd hour, in joyful hope . . .  
But, like a vapour of the desert, hope  
Hath disappear'd already.—Oh my son,  
What boots it now the battle to defer ?  
To dread defeat is worse than to endure it.  
And let us once endure it :—Let us fight  
To-day ; I will it.

*Jon.* We to-day shall conquer.  
Father, resume thy hopes : hope never shone  
With more authentic brightness on thy prospects.  
Ah, recompose thy looks ! my heart is big  
With presages of victory. All this plain  
Shall with the bodies of our foes be cover'd ;  
And to the ravenous vultures will we leave  
A horrid banquet . . .

*Mi.* To a calmer spot  
Within thy palace we will soon repair,  
Oh father. There, amid thy palms enthroned,  
Joyful thyself, thou, by restoring to her  
Her much-loved husband, wilt restore to life  
Thy desolate daughter . . .

*Sa.* . . . Evermore in tears ? . . .  
Are these, indeed, the pleasing objects doom'd

To renovate Saul's languid, wither'd mind ?  
 Art thou a solace thus to my just grief ?  
 Daughter of tears, depart ; go ; leave me ; vanish.

*Mi.* Alas ! . . . Thou would'st not, father, that I  
 wept ? . . .

Father, and who in everlasting tears  
 Now keeps me, if not thou ?

*Jon.* Refrain ; would'st thou  
 Be irksome to thy father ?—Saul, take comfort :  
 A minister of war and victory  
 Stands in the camp : a spirit of salvation,  
 With dawning light descended from the skies,  
 Which o'er all Israel's host will spread to-day  
 His brooding wings. A certainty of conquest,  
 E'en to thy heart, will quickly circulate.

*Sa.* Now, perhaps, thou would'st that I should  
 take a part

In thy weak transports ? I ?—What victory ?  
 What spirit comes ? . . . Let us all weep. To-day  
 That venerable oak, torn up, will shew  
 Its squalid roots, where heretofore it spread  
 Its stately branches to the gales of Heaven.  
 All, all is weeping, tempest, blood, and death.  
 Rend, rend your garments ; scatter on your hair  
 Polluting dust. Yes, this day is the last ;  
 To us the final day.

*Ab.* Oft have I said it :  
 Your importuning presence evermore  
 Redoubles his fierce pangs.

*Mi.* And what ? Must we  
 Leave our beloved father ?

*Jon.* At his side  
 Presumest thou alone to stand ? Dost thou

Presume that in thy hands? . . .

*Sa.* What, what is this?

Rage sits upon the faces of my sons.

Who, who has wrong'd them? Abner, thou perchance?

These are my blood; dost not know that? . . . Remember . . .

*Jon.* Ah yes! we are thy blood; and for thy sake Hold ourselves ready all our blood to shed . . .

*Mi.* When at thy hands my consort I require, Am I by selfish love alone impell'd?

I ask of thee the champion of thy people, The terror of Philistia, thy defender.

In thy disconsolate fantastic hours,

And in thy fatal presages of death,

Ah! did not David sometimes solace thee

With his celestial music? Was not he

A beam of joy to thy benighted soul?

*Jon.* And I, thou knowest if I wear a sword.

But what boots that, if the resounding steps

Of Israel's warrior to my steps give not

The law supreme? Should we of fighting *speak*

Were David here? We had already conquer'd.

*Sa.* Oh times long past! . . . Oh my illustrious days Of joyful victory! . . . Lo! they throng before me— Triumphant images of past success.

I from the camp return, with bloody sweat

All cover'd, and with honourable dust.

And praises to the Lord . . . I praise the Lord!

The ears of God are deafen'd to my voice;

Mute is my lip . . . Where is my glory, where?

Where is the blood of my slain enemies?

*Jon.* Thou would'st have all in David . . .

*Mi.* But with thee  
David is not, oh no : to banishment  
Thou drov'st him from thy presence, sought'st his  
death . . .

David, thy son, thy noblest ornament,  
Modest and docile ; more than lightning swift  
To obey thee ; and in loving thee more warm  
Than thy own children. Father, ah ! desist . . .

*Sa.* Tears from my eyes are gushing ! Who hath  
thus  
Forced me to unaccustom'd tenderness ? . . .  
Compel me not to weep.

*Ab.* I counsel thee,  
Oh king, withdraw from hence to thy pavilion.  
Thy marshall'd forces, ready for the combat,  
Ere long I will display to thee.—Now come ;  
And be convinced that nothing is in David . . .

SCENE THE THIRD.

*David, Saul, Abner, Jonathan, Michal.*

*Da.* . . . Except his innocence.

*Sa.* What do I see ?

*Mi.* Oh heaven !

*Jon.* What hast thou done ?

*Ab.* Audacious . . .

*Jon.* Father . . .

*Mi.* Father, he is my spouse ; to me thou gav'st  
him.

*Sa.* Oh what a sight is this !

*Da.* Oh Saul, my king ;  
Thou dost demand this head ; for a long time  
Already hast thou sought it ; here it is ;

Sever it now . . . 'tis thine.

*Sa.* What do I hear?

Oh David . . . David! God doth speak in thee.

A God to-day hither hath brought thee to me . . .

*Da.* Yes, monarch; he who is the God alone;  
He who in Ela prompted me to meet,  
Although a stripling and yet inexperienced,  
The menacing colossal arrogance  
Of fierce Goliath, clad in complete mail:  
That God who thence on thy tremendous arms  
Heap'd victory on victory; and who,  
In his designs always inscrutable,  
Chose, as an instrument, my obscure hand  
For signal exploits: hither now that God  
Doth usher me to thee with victory,  
Now as thou likest best, a simple warrior,  
Or leader of thy bands, if I deserve  
Such a distinction, take me. On the earth  
First let thy foes be strewn: by the keen breath  
Of northern blasts be all the clouds dispersed  
That gather round thy intercepted throne:  
Then shalt thou afterwards with death reward me.  
Nor one faint struggle, nor a single thought,  
Should my death cost thee. Thou, oh king, shalt  
say,

"Be David slain;" and Abner instantly  
Shall slay me.—I will grasp nor sword nor shield;  
Within the palace of my absolute lord  
All weapons misbecome me except patience,  
Humility, and prayers, and passive love,  
And innocence. I ought, if God so will,  
Die as thy son, not as thy enemy.  
Thus was the son of the first ancestor

Of Israel's people ready to resign,  
 On the great mount, his sacrificial blood ;  
 Nor did a gesture or a word escape  
 Belying perfect passiveness in him :  
 Already had his father raised one hand  
 To slay him, while he fondly kiss'd the other.—  
 Saul gave my life ; Saul takes that life away :  
 Through him I gain'd renown ; through him I lose it :  
 He made me great, and now he makes me nothing.

*Sa.* Oh, what a thick mist from my aged eyes  
 Those words disperse ! What voice sounds in my  
 heart ?

David, thou speakest as a man of valour,  
 And valiant were thy deeds ; but, blind with pride,  
 Thou dar'dst despise me afterwards ; dar'dst raise  
 Thyself above me ; to my praise pretend,  
 And clothe thyself with my reflected light.  
 And, were I not thy king, does it become  
 A warrior, entering on the paths of fame,  
 His hoary predecessor to despise ?

Thou, great in all things, wert not so in this.  
 Of thee the daughters of my people sung :  
 " David the valiant, his ten thousands slew ;  
 " Saul slew his thousands." To my inmost heart,  
 David, thou woundedst me. Why saidst thou not,  
 " Saul in his youth not only slew a thousand,  
 " But thousand thousands : he the warrior is ;  
 " Me he created."

*Da.* I indeed said this ;  
 But those who to thy hearing gain'd access,  
 More loudly cried : " Too powerful David is :  
 " In all men's mouths, and in the hearts of many ;  
 " If thou, Saul, slay him not, who will restrain him ?"

With less of art, and more of verity,  
What said not Abner to the king? "Ah, David  
"Too much surpasses me; hence I abhor him;  
"Hence envy, fear him; hence I wish him dead."

*Ab.* Miscreant! the day that thou clandestinely  
Didst with thy prophets trait'rously cabal;  
When for thy monarch thou didst spread in secret  
Infamous snares; when shelter thou didst seek  
E'en in the bosom of Philistia's sons;  
And with impure foes spending days profane,  
Didst meanwhile with domestic traitors hold  
A secret commerce: now do I perchance  
Only allege this? or didst thou not do it?  
At first, who more install'd thee than myself  
Within thy monarch's heart? Who prompted him  
To give thee Michal? Abner... he alone...

*Mi.* 'Twas I, I at my father's hand obtain'd  
David as consort; his I sought to be;  
I, smitten by his virtue. He inspired  
My earliest sighs; the idol of my heart,  
My hope, my life he was, and he alone,  
Although disguised in base obscurity,  
Reduced to poverty, yet evermore  
David had been more welcome to my heart  
Than any proud king whom the east adores.

*Sa.* But thou, oh David, canst thou controvert  
The charges Abner brings? Didst thou not seek  
A shelter in Philistia? Didst thou not  
Sow in my people seeds of black revolt?  
Hast thou not plotted many times to take  
Thy monarch's life, thy sacred father's life?

*Da.* Behold; this border of thy royal garment  
Answers for me. Dost recognize it, thou?



Take it; examine it.

*Sa.* Give it to me.

What do I see? 'Tis mine; assuredly...

Whence didst thou take it?...

*Da.* From thyself I took it,

With this my sword, from off thy royal robe,  
My own hands severed it.—Remember'st thou

En-gedi? There, where barbarously thou

Pursuedst me, a banish'd man, to death;

There was I, in the cave, that from the fount

Derives its name, a friendless fugitive:

There, thou alone, thy warriors having station'd

To guard the abrupt entrance of the cave,

On downy pillows, in calm quietness,

Didst close thine eyes in sleep... Yes, thou, oh  
"heaven,"

With rancorous and with bloody thoughts inflamed,

Didst slumber there! Thou seest how mighty God

Defeats the schemes of human subtlety!

There with impunity I might have slain thee,

And by another issue have escaped.

This border of thy robe sufficiently

Proves this. Behold thee, thou a king,

A haughty and a great one, in the midst

Of arm'd battalions, fallen in the hands

Of the proscribed calumniated youth...

Abner, the valiant Abner, where was he?...

Thus does he guard thy life! Thus serve his king!

Thou seest in whom thou hast reposed thy trust;

On whom thou hast thy indignation wreak'd.—

Now art thou satisfied? Now hast thou not,

Saul, of my heart proofs incontestable,

Of my fidelity and innocence?

Not proofs persuasive of the little love,  
Of the malignant and invidious rage,  
And the precarious vigilance of Abner?

*Sa.* My son, thou hast conquer'd; . . . thou hast  
wholly conquer'd.

Abner, do thou behold him, and be dumb,

*Mi.* Oh joy! . . .

*Da.* Oh father! . . .

*Jo.* Oh auspicious day!

*Mi.* My husband! . . .

*Sa.* Yes, this is a day of joy,  
A day of restitution and of triumph.  
I will that thou to-day command my armies :  
Abner oppose not ; since I will it so.  
Let no contention 'twixt you two arise,  
Except an emulation which shall slay  
Most of Saul's enemies. Thou, Jonathan,  
Beside the brother of thy heart shalt fight :  
David to me is surety for thy life ;  
And thou art so for his.

*Jo.* When David leads

Our armies, God himself becomes our surety. *A*

*Mi.* May God restore thee to me ; he will save  
thee . . .

*Sa.* Let this suffice. Before the fight begins  
Come to the tent, oh son, a little while,  
And rest thy wearied limbs. Thy spouse beloved  
Shall sooth the long affliction of thy absence.  
With her own hands meanwhile shall she provide  
And minister thy food. Daughter, do thou  
Repair in part (for thou alone canst do it)  
The involuntary errors of thy father.

## ACT THE THIRD.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*David, Abner.*

*Ab.* Behold me : at thy summons I appear  
Ere scarce the king hath from the banquet risen.

*Da.* I wish'd to speak to thee in secret here.

*Ab.* Thou would'st perchance hear of the approaching fight ? . . .

*Da.* And at the same time say, that thou art not  
Subordinate to me ; that both alike  
Our people and our lawful king we serve,  
And Israel's mighty God. Let not our breasts  
Harbour another thought.

*Ab.* I for our king,  
From whose blood I descend, had in the camp  
Already brandish'd my ensanguined sword  
Before the shrill twang of thy sling was heard.

*Da.* The monarch's blood runs not within my  
veins :

To all my deeds are known ; I boast them not ;  
Abner, thou know'st them.—In forgetfulness  
Let them be buried : only recollect  
Thine own ; and, emulous of thy former fame,  
Seek only to surpass thyself to-day.

*Ab.* I hitherto believed myself the leader :  
David was not here then ; I ventured hence  
To order all things for the victory :  
Hear what I should have done had I commanded.—  
Full in our front, from north to south, the camp  
Of the Philistines fills the valley's length.

Behind it rise thick bushes ; 'tis defended  
By lofty banks in front : eastward 'tis flank'd  
By a not lofty hill, of gentle slope  
Towards the camp, but rough, precipitous,  
On the opposite descent ; an ample outlet  
Lies amid mountains to the west, through which  
By a vast plain the traveller may go,  
Exempt from hindrance, to the murmuring ocean.  
Here, if we thither can decoy our foes,  
The victory will be ours.

But, to accomplish that, 'tis needful first  
To feign retreat. In three battalions form'd,  
If we towards the valley's left side bend,  
We shall in front encounter their right flank.  
The first battalion with forced march advances,  
And seems to fly ; the second, more supine,  
Remains behind, in thin, disorder'd ranks,  
A sure temptation to our enemies.  
Meanwhile, a band conspicuous for its valour  
The rugged hill towards the east has gain'd,  
And on the rear of the invading host  
Reissues. Thus in front is it enclosed,  
Behind, transversely ; and behold we make  
Of it, a dreadful, universal carnage.

*Da.* Equally wise and valorous art thou.  
And nothing, Abner, should we dare to change  
Of thy design. Valour, wherever found,  
Obtains my praise. A soldier I will be,  
And not a leader : and my coming here  
Shall, by the addition of a sword alone,  
Alter thy battle.

*Ab.* David is the leader ;  
David is master of our armies. Who

Combats, compared with him ?

*Da.* Who less indeed  
Should stoop to jealousy than Abner, since  
He is so highly gifted ? Excellent,  
However I behold it, is thy scheme.  
Myself and Jonathan beside the tent  
Of Saul shall combat ; further, towards the north,  
Uz shall advance ; with thousand chosen men  
Sadoc the eastern eminence shall gain ;  
And thou, with greatest numbers, shall command  
The body of the army.

*Ab.* This to thee  
Belongs : it is the place of honour.

*Da.* Hence  
I place thee there.—As yet the sun ascends :  
Thou shalt keep all in steady preparation ;  
But till the fourth hour of the afternoon  
Be not the trumpets heard. Perceiv'st thou not  
A violent west wind blows ; the dazzling sun  
And driven dust will, towards the close of day,  
Assist our enterprize.

*Ab.* Thou speakest wisely.

*Da.* Now go, command, and do not from thyself,  
With base and courtly artifice, of which  
Thou should'st be ignorant, avert that praise,  
Which, as a captain, thou so well deservest.

#### SCENE THE SECOND.

*David.*

*Da.* The order of the fight is wise and subtle.—  
But if he have not gain'd his soldiers' hearts,  
What boots the forecast of a general ?

Of this alone is Abner destitute;  
And this God grants to me. To-day we conquer;  
To-morrow once more do I leave the king;  
For never in his sight can there be peace  
For me . . . What do I say? New victory  
Would be ascribed to me as a new crime.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Michal, David.*

*Mi.* David, hast thou not heard? My father scarce  
Rose from a joyous banquet, when towards him  
Abner advanced, and spake to him an instant.  
I enter'd, he retired; I found the king  
No longer what he was.

*Da.* But yet, what said he?  
What couldest thou infer? . . .

*Mi.* Erewhile was he  
Devoted to our cause; with us he wept;  
Alternately embraced us; and from us,  
As if in his defence, he prophesied  
A race of future heroes. He appear'd  
To us, as he said this, more than a father;  
More than a king he now appears to me.

*Da.* Ah! do not weep, oh wife, before thy time:  
Saul is our king; his will in us must be  
Accomplish'd. So that he to-day obtain  
The battle, let him 'gainst myself to-morrow  
Resume his cruel thoughts: I will resume  
My abject state, my bitter banishment,  
My fugitive and apprehensive life.  
My true and only death is thus to leave thee:  
And yet I ought to do it . . . Ah vain hopes!

Ah nuptial ties for thee how inauspicious!  
Another consort, that of which I rob thee,  
To thee had given, a prosperous royal state.  
Wretch that I am! . . . Nor canst thou ever make me,  
(Thy ever fugitive and homeless consort,)  
The father of a numerous blooming offspring.

*Mi.* Ah no! we never shall again be parted;  
No one will dare to rend thee from my breast.  
I never shall return, no, never more,  
To that disconsolate life which I dragg'd on  
Deprived of thee: rather than so return  
May I become an inmate of the grave.  
I languish'd in that palace of despair,  
Alone and weeping, through the tedious days;  
The shades of night with horrible dreams were  
fraught.

Now I beheld my cruel father's sword  
Suspended o'er thy head; thy voice I heard  
Persuasive, weeping, supplicating, such  
As might from breasts of adamant dislodge  
Deep-rooted hate and fell obduracy;  
And yet the barbarous Saul, in spite of this,  
Plunged in thy heart the dagger. Now I saw thee  
'Mid secret labyrinths of low-brow'd caves,  
Pillowing thy body on unyielding flint;  
While at the motion of a rustling leaf  
Thy faint heart trembled; and thou sought'st another,  
And thence another, yet in vain to find  
A place of rest, or quietness, or friends:  
Sick, anxious, weary . . . worn with parching thirst . .  
And ravening hunger . . . Can I represent  
My pangs, my apprehensions, and my woes?—  
No more, no, never will I leave thee, never.

*Da.* Thou torturest my heart : ah cease : . . This  
day  
Is consecrated to blood, and not to tears.

*Mi.* Provided that an obstacle to-day  
Arise not to thy fighting, I fear not  
The fight on thy account. Thou hast a shield  
Proof against all assaults, Almighty God :  
But I am fearful lest perfidious Abner,  
On thy account, frustrate, or intercept  
The victory to-day.

*Da.* And what, did Saul  
Seem to thee doubtfully to trust to me  
To-day the conduct of the enterprize ?

*Mi.* I heard not that ; but sternly did he frown,  
And whisper'd to himself I know not what  
Of trait'rous priests, of strangers in the camp,  
Of simulated virtue . . . Broken, dark,  
Mournful, tremendous words, to her who is  
The wife of David and the child of Saul.

*Da.* See him : we will be heard.

*Mi.* Just God, I pray thee,  
Succour to-day thy consecrated servant :  
Confound blasphemers ; reillumine my father ;  
Protect my husband ; and defend thy people.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Saul, Jonathan, David, Michal.*

*Jon.* Ah come, beloved father ; to thy thoughts  
Allow a little respite : the pure air  
Will bring thee some refreshment ; come, and sit  
A little while among thy children here.

*Sa.* What is it that you say ?



*Mi.* Beloved father ! ..

*Sa.* Who, who are ye ? .. Who speaks of pure air here ? ..

This ! .. 'tis a thick impenetrable gloom ;  
A land of darkness ; and the shades of death ..  
Ah see ! more nearly it approaches me ? ..  
A fatal wreath of blood surrounds the sun ..  
Heard'st thou the death-notes of ill-omen'd birds  
With loud laments the vocal air resounds  
That smite my ears, compelling me to weep.  
But what, do ye weep also ? ..

*Jon.* Mighty God  
Of Israel, dost thou thus thy face avert  
From wretched Saul ? Is he, thy servant once,  
Abandon'd to the adversary thus ?

*Mi.* Father, thy much-loved daughter is beside thee.

If thou art cheerful, she is also cheerful ;  
She, if thou weepest, weeps ... But wherefore now  
Should we shed tears ? Pleasure hath reappeared.

*Sa.* Thou would'st say, David. Ah ! .. Why doth not he

Also embrace me with my other children ?

*Da.* Oh father ! .. I have been restrain'd by fear  
Of importuning thee. Ah ! why canst thou  
Not read my heart ? I evermore am thine.

*Sa.* Thou lovest then ... the house ... of Saul ?

*Da.* I love it !

Oh heaven ! Dear as the apple of mine eye  
To me is Jonathan ; I neither know,  
Nor heed a peril in the world for thee ;  
Let my wife, if she can, say with what love,  
And how much love, I love her.

*Sa.* Yet thyself  
Thou mightily dost prize.

*Da.* I, prize myself. . .  
No despicable soldier in the camp,  
In court thy son-in-law, I deem myself;  
But nothing, nothing in the sight of God.

*Sa.* Incessantly to me of God thou speakest;  
Yet thou well knowest that the crafty rage,  
Cruel, tremendous, of perfidious priests,  
Has for a long time sever'd me from God.  
Dost thou thus name him to insult me?

*Da.* I  
Name him, to give him glory. Why dost thou  
Believe that he no longer is with thee?  
He doth not dwell with him who loves him not :  
But doth he ever fail to succour him  
Who oft invokes him, and who hath reposed  
In him implicit trust ? He to the throne  
Appointed thee ; and on that throne he keeps thee :  
And if in him, in him exclusively  
Thou dost confide, he's thine, and thou art his.

*Sa.* Who speaks of heaven ? . . Is he in snowy vest  
Enrobed who thus his sacred lip unseals ?  
Let us behold him . . Thou'rt a warrior ; thou  
Graspest the sword : . . approach, and let me see  
If David thus or Samuel doth accost me.—  
What sword is this ? 'Tis not the same, methinks,  
Which I, with my own hands, on thee bestow'd.

*Da.* This is the sword that my poor sling acquired ;  
The sword that over me in Elah hung  
Threatening my life ; in fierce Goliath's hands  
I saw it flash a horrid glare of death

Before my eyes ; he grasp'd it ; but it bears  
Not mine, but his coagulated blood.

*Sa.* Was not that sword, a consecrated thing,  
In Nob, within the tabernacle hung ?  
Was it not wrapp'd within the mystic Ephod,  
And thus from all unhallow'd eyes conceal'd,  
Devoted to the Lord of hosts for ever ?

*Da.* 'Tis true ; but . .

*Sa.* Whence didst thou obtain it then ?  
Who dared to give it thee ?

*Da.* I will confess.

Powerless and fugitive to Nob I came :  
Wherefore I fled thou knowest. Every path  
Was crowded with unhappy wretches ; I,  
Defenceless, found myself at every step  
Within the jaws of death. With humble brow  
I kneel'd within the tabernacle, where  
The spirit of God descends : and there, these arms  
(Which if a living man might to his side  
Refit them, David surely was that man)  
Myself demanded of the priest.

*Sa.* And he . .

*Da.* Gave them to me.

*Sa.* He was . .

*Da.* Ahimeleoh.

*Sa.* Perfidious traitor ! . . . Vile ! . . . Where is the  
altar ? . .

Oh rage . . Ah, all are miscreants ! traitors all ! . .  
Oh foes to God ! are ye his ministers ? . .  
Black souls in vestments white ! . . Where is the axe ?  
Where is the altar ? . . Let him be destroy'd ! . .  
Where is the offering ? . . I myself will slay him.

*Mi.* Father !

*Jon.* What mean these words ? Where dost thou fly ?

Be pacified, I pray thee : there are not  
Or altars here or victims : in the priests  
Respect that God who hears thee evermore.

*Sa.* Who thus restrains me ? Who resists me thus ?  
Who forces me to sit ?

*Jon.* Father . .

*Da.* Ah thou,  
Great God of Israel, do thou succour him :  
Thy servant kneels to thee, and prays for this.

*Sa.* I am bereft of peace : the sun, the earth,  
My children, and my power of thought, all, all  
Are taken from me ! . . Ah unhappy Saul !  
Who doth console thee ? Who is now the guide,  
The prop of thy bewilder'd feebleness ?  
Thy children are all mute ; they scowl on thee . .  
And of the doting and infirm old man  
They only wish the death : nothing attracts  
My children's wishes but the diadem,  
Whose weight thy hoary head but ill sustains.  
Wrest it at once : and at the same time sever  
From this now tremulous and decaying form  
Your father's palsied head . . Ah wretched state !  
Better were death ! I wish to die ! . .

*Mi.* Oh father !

We all desire thy life. We each of us  
Would die ourselves to rescue thee from death.

*Jon.* Now since in tears his fury is dissolved,  
Brother, do thou, to recompose his soul,  
Exert thy voice. So many times already  
Hast thou rapt him with thy celestial songs

In calm oblivion.

*Mi.* Yes ; thou seest now  
The respiration in his panting breast  
Almost subsides : his eye-balls, late so fierce,  
So hot and dry, swim in balsamic tears :  
Now is the time to lend him thy assistance.

*Da.* May God in mercy speak to him through me.

## 1.

Omnipotent, eternal, infinite,  
Thou who dost govern each created thing ;  
Thou, who from nothing mad'st me by thy might,  
Blest with a soul that dares to thee take wing ;  
Thou who canst pierce the abyss of endless night,  
And all its mysteries into day-light bring ;  
The universe doth tremble at thy nod,  
And sinners prostrate fall at the out-stretch'd arm  
of God.

## 2.

Oft on the gorgeous blazing wings ere now  
Of thousand cherubim wert thou reveal'd ;  
Oft did thy pure divinity endow  
Thy people's shepherd in the martial field.  
To him a stream of eloquence wert thou ;  
Thou wert his sword, his wisdom, and his shield.  
From thy bright throne, oh God, bestow one ray  
To cleave the gathering clouds that intercept the  
day.

## 3.

In tears and darkness we . .

*Sa.* Hear I the voice  
Of David? . . From a mortal lethargy  
It seems to wake me, and to me displays  
The cheering radiance of my early years.

*David.*

1.

" Who comes, who comes, unseen, yet heard?  
" A sable cloud of dust appear'd,  
" Driven by the eastern blast.—  
" But it is burst; and from its womb  
" A thousand brandish'd swords illume  
" The track through which it past.

2.

" Saul, as a tower, his forehead rears,  
" His head a flaming circlet wears;  
" The earth beneath his feet  
" Echoes with tramp of horse and men;  
" The sea, the sky, the hills, the plain,  
" The warlike sounds repeat.  
" In awful majesty doth Saul appear;  
" Horsemen and chariots from before him fly;  
" Chill'd by his presence is each heart with fear;  
" And god-like terrors lighten in his eye.

1.

" Ye sons of Ammon, late so proud,  
" Where is the scorn, the insults loud,  
" Ye raised against our host?

" Your corpses more than fill the plain ;  
 " The ample harvest of your slain  
 " Invalidates your boast.

## 2.

" See what it is thus to depend  
 " On gods unable to defend.—  
 " But wherefore from afar  
 " Hear I another trumpet sound ?  
 " 'Tis Saul's :—he levels with the ground  
 " All Edom's sons of war.

" Thus Moab, Soba, by his arms laid low,  
 " With impious Amalek, united fall :  
 " Saul, like a stream fed by dissolving snow,  
 " Defeats, disperses, overwhelms them all."

*Sa.* This is the voice of my departed years,  
 That from the tomb to glory now recalls me.  
 I live again in my victorious youth  
 When I hear this. . . What do I say ? Alas ! . .  
 Should cries of war be now address'd to me ?  
 Oblivion, indolence, and peace, invite  
 The old man to themselves.

*Da.* Let peace be sung.

" Weary and thirsty, see he lies  
 " Beside his native stream ;  
 " God's champion, whose past victories  
 " Wake many a glorious dream.

" The glossy laurel's evergreen  
 " Doth screen his head from heat ;

- " His children all around him seen,  
 " His sighs and smiles repeat.  
  
 " They weep and smile, then smile and weep,  
 " With sympathy endued ;  
 " And still a strict accordance keep  
 " To every varying mood.  
  
 " His daughter's gentle hand unfits  
 " His crested helm and sword ;  
 " His consort fond beside him sits,  
 " Embracing her loved lord.  
  
 " Another doth clear water bring  
 " From the pure ambient flood,  
 " To cleanse his stately brows, where cling  
 " Commingled dust and blood.  
  
 " A cloud of odorous flowers she spreads,  
 " Which breathe their perfumes near ;  
 " And on his honour'd hand *she* sheds  
 " The duteous filial tear.  
  
 " But why sits one apart reclined,  
 " In pensive mood alone ?  
 " Alas, she mourns that others find  
 " A task, while she has none.  
  
 " But different thoughts, with eager haste,  
 " Attract the band of boys ;  
 " Till his turn comes to be embraced,  
 " One son himself employs



“ To make the blood-encrusted blade  
“ From spot and blemish clear :  
“ With envy fired, another said,  
“ ‘ When shall I poise that spear ?

“ ‘ That ponderous lance when shall I wield,  
“ ‘ That now defies my strength ?’  
“ Another grasps the blazon’d shield,  
“ And stalks behind its length.”

“ Tears of sweet surprise,  
“ From forth the swimming eyes  
“ Of Saul are seen to roll :  
“ For of his blooming race,  
“ So full of royal grace,  
“ He knows that he’s the soul.

“ The pleasure how entire,  
“ How happy is the sire,  
“ Whose waking thoughts inspire  
“ Affections so sincere !—  
“ But now the day is o’er,  
“ The zephyrs breathe no more ;  
“ And sleep’s soft powers restore  
“ The monarch we revere.”

*Sa.* Happy the father of a race like this !  
Oh peace of mind ! . . how precious are thy gifts  
To wretches like myself by thee deserted ! . .  
I feel ineffably through all my veins  
Balsamic dews of sweet composure steal . .  
But what pretendest thou ? To make Saul vile

Amid domestic ease ? Does valiant Saul  
Now lie an useless implement of war ?

*David.*

“ The king reposes, but heroic dreams  
“ With fearful majesty before him glance,  
“ Pregnant with death and visionary themes.

“ Behold, transfix’d with his victorious lance,  
“ The conquer’d tyrant of the haughty foes ;  
“ An awful shade in spectral gloom advance.

“ Behold a flash that instantaneous glows . .  
“ It is Saul’s brandish’d sword, that no man spares,  
“ The weak and strong confounding with its blows.—

“ The terrible lion thus sometimes forbears  
“ To make the forest with his cries resound,  
“ For even he in sleep his strength repairs ;

“ But not the silence of his den profound,  
“ Can courage to the afflicted flocks restore ;  
“ Or make the swain with less fear look around,  
“ For well he knows that he will prowl once more.

“ The monarch is roused from his slumbers,  
“ Arms, arms, he imperiously cries.  
“ They are vanish’d—the enemies numbers ;  
“ What champion his valour defies ?

“ I see, I see a track of terrible fire,  
“ To which perforce the hostile squadrons yield.  
“ Before the arms of Israel they retire,  
“ Which, black with hostile gore, possess the field.

" The winged thunderbolt huge stones doth shower,  
" And far less promptly doth the foe retreat  
" Than our dread sovereign in his mighty power  
" Pursue him, and his overthrow complete.

" Like a proud eagle, his audacious flight,  
" Impt with immortal wings, towards the pole  
" He aims. His eyes are like the lightning bright;  
" His talons God's own thunderbolts controul,

" To annihilate those impious sons of earth,  
" Who in false temples have false gods adored;  
" Whose impure gods to impure rites gave birth,  
" Who dare compare themselves with Israel's Lord.

" Long, long have I pursued his ardent path;  
" Now it behoves me once more to pursue  
" His foes on earth; with heaven-directed wrath  
" To trample down and crush Philistia's crew;

" And with the assistance of the God of hosts,  
" Prove that, as he, so I maintain his laws;  
" And prove that now the camp of Israel boasts  
" Two swords resistless in a righteous cause."

*Sa.* Who, who thus boasts? Is there, except my  
sword,  
Which I unsheathe, another in the camp?  
He's a blasphemer, let him perish, he  
Who dares defy it.

*Mi.* Ah forbear: Oh heaven!..

*Jon.* Father, what would'st thou do?

*Da.* Unhappy king!

*Mi.* Ah fly! .. Ah fly! With difficulty we  
From violence restrain him.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Jonathan, Saul, Michal.*

*Mi.* Stop, oh stop,  
Beloved father!

*Jon.* I beseech thee stop.

*Sa.* Who thus restrains me? Who presumes to  
do it? ...

Where is my sword? Restore my sword at once ..

*Jon.* Do thou retire with us, beloved father :

I shall not suffer thee to advance a step.

Behold, thy children now are all alone :

Return with us to thy pavilion ; now

Thou needest quietness. Ah come! .. Refrain

From causeless rage ; thy children stand around thee.

*Mi.* And they shall never, never quit thy presence.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE THE FIRST.

*Jonathan, Michal.*

*Mi.* Jonathan, tell me ; to my father's tent  
May David now return ?

*Jon.* Ah no! with him

Saul is not reconciled, although he have

Regain'd his reason ; but fell jealousy

Hath round his heart too intricately twined

Her blighting fibres ; slow will be his cure.

Return to David thou, and leave him not.

*Mi.* Alas! .. Who is more wretched than myself?

I have so well conceal'd him, that no man  
Will ever find him : to this hiding-place  
I now return to him.

*Jon.* Oh heaven ! behold  
My poor distracted father once more comes :  
He never finds a resting-place.

*Mi.* Ah me . .  
What shall I say to him ? . . I will retire . .

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Saul, Michal, Jonathan.*

*Sa.* Who flies at my approach ? Thou, Michal,  
thou ?

*Mi.* My lord . .

*Sa.* Where, where is David ?

*Mi.* . . I know not . .

*Sa.* Thou knowest not ? . .

*Jon.* Oh father ! . .

*Sa.* Seek him then ;  
Go, bring him hither quickly.

*Mi.* I pursue him ? . .  
Whither . . ah . . whither ?

*Sa.* 'Twas thy king that spake,  
And hast thou not obey'd him ?

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Saul, Jonathan.*

*Sa.* Jonathan,  
Lov'st thou thy father ?

*Jon.* Father, yes, I love thee :  
But, loving thee, I also love thy glory :  
Hence sometimes I oppose, far as a son

Ought to oppose them, thy unjust desires.

*Sa.* Often thy father's arm dost thou restrain :  
But thou dost turn against thyself that sword  
Which thou avertest from another's breast.  
Yes, yes, defend that David to the utmost ;  
Shortly will he . . Dost thou not hear a voice  
That in thy heart cries, " David will be king !"  
—David !—He shall be immolated first.

*Jon.* And doth not God, with a more terrible voice,  
Cry in thy heart, " David is my beloved !  
" He is the chosen of the Lord of hosts ?"  
Doth not each act of his confirm this truth ?  
Was not the frantic and invidious rage  
Of Abner silenced by his mere approach ?  
And thou, when thou re-enterest in thyself,  
Dost thou not find that, only at his presence,  
All thy suspicions vanish like a cloud  
Before the sun ? And dost thou fondly dream,  
When the malignant spirit visits thee,  
That I restrain thy arm ? Thy God restrains it.  
Scarcely wilt thou have levell'd at his breast  
The misadventurous sword, when thou wilt be  
Forced to withdraw it suddenly : in tears  
Thou thyself prostrate at his feet wilt fall ;  
Yes, father, thou repentant : for thou art  
Not impious . .

*Sa.* But too, too true thy words.  
A strange inexplicable mystery  
This David is to me. No sooner I  
In Elah had beheld him than he pleased  
My eyes ; but never, never won my heart.  
When I might almost be disposed to love him,  
A fierce repulsion shoots athwart my breast,

And weans me from him. Scarcely do I wish,  
Scarcely resolve his death, than, if I see him,  
Me he disarms, and with such wonder fills me,  
That in his presence I become a nothing . .  
Ah ! this is surely, this the vengeance is  
Of the inscrutable almighty hand !  
Tremendous hand ! I now begin to know thee . .  
But what, why should I needlessly explain  
Common events by superhuman causes ?  
God have I ne'er offended : this is then  
The vengeance of the priests. Yes, David is  
An instrument of sacerdotal malice.  
Expiring Samuel he beheld in Rama :  
The implacable old man to him address'd  
His dying words. Who knows, who knows if he  
Upon the head of this my enemy  
Pour'd not the sacred oil with which before  
My brows he had anointed ? Perhaps thou knowest . .  
Speak . . yes, thou knowest : . . I conjure thee, speak.  
*Jon.* Father, I know not : but if it were so,  
Should not I, equally with thee, esteem  
Myself in this offended ? Am not I  
Thy eldest son ? Dost thou not mean this throne  
For me, when thou art gathered to thy fathers ?  
If I then do not do it, who should dare  
To make complaints at this ? In fortitude  
David surpasses me ; in virtue, sense,  
In every quality : and as the more  
His worth surpasses mine, the more I love him.  
Now, should that power that gives and takes away  
Kingdoms at will, bestow this throne on David,  
What more conciliatory evidence  
Of heaven's interposition can I ask ?

He is more worthy of that throne than I :  
 And God hath summon'd him to lofty deeds,  
 The shepherd of his people.—But meanwhile  
 I swear, that he has always been to thee  
 A faithful subject and a loyal son.  
 Now to that God to whom it doth belong,  
 The future yield : and against God, meanwhile,  
 Against the truth, ah, harden not thy heart.  
 If a divinity in Samuel spake not,  
 How could an undesigning, weak old man,  
 Half in the grave already, such effects  
 Produce by David's means ? That mystery  
 Of love and hatred which thou feel'st for David ;  
 That apprehension at a battle's name,  
 (A terror hitherto to thee unknown,)  
 Whence, Saul, can it proceed ? Is there a power  
 On earth producing such effects as these ? ..

*Sa.* What language dost thou hold ? A son of Saul  
 Art thou ?—Feel'st thou no interest for the throne ?—  
 Foresee'st thou not the cruel stratagems  
 By which the usurper will defend his claim ?  
 My house will be abolish'd, from the roots  
 Torn up, by him who seizes on my sceptre.  
 Thy sons, thy brothers, and thyself destroy'd ..  
 Not one of Saul's descendants will remain ..  
 Oh guilty and insatiable thirst  
 Of power, what horrors can'st thou not produce ?  
 To reign, the brother immolates the brother ;  
 Mothers their children ; wives their consorts slay ;  
 The son his father .. Sacrilegious throne !  
 Thou art the seat of blood and cruelty !

*Jon,* Has man a shield against the sword of  
 heaven ?



Not menaces or prayers can turn aside  
The wrath of God omnipotent, who oft  
The proud abases, and exalts the humble.

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Saul, Jonathan, Abner, Ahimelech, Soldiers.*

*Ab.* King, if thy presence I behold once more,  
Ere streams of hostile blood by my means flow,  
To this by mighty reasons am I urged.  
David, the champion, the invincible,  
He who our victory or defeat decides,  
David is fled, and none knows whither fled.  
Scarce is an hour now wanting to the time  
Appointed for attack : now, hear'st thou not  
The warriors, chafing with impatient ardour,  
Fill with loud cries the air ; the earth resound,  
Beaten with iron hoof of fiery steeds :  
Howlings and neighings, and the blaze of helms,  
And brandish'd swords, and fulminating shouts,  
Enough to make the veriest coward valiant ;  
Yet who sees David ? Who brings tidings of him ?—  
Behold, (the authentic succour of the Almighty !)  
Behold, who in the camp stands in his place.  
This man, in soft, white, sacerdotal stole  
Enveloped, having gain'd the camp by stealth,  
Tremblingly slunk beside the Benjamites.  
Behold him ; hear from him the lofty cause  
Which to such peril guides him.

*Ahi.* I will speak it,  
If not forbidden by the king's displeasure.

*Sa.* The king's displeasure ! Thou dost then de-  
serve it !..

Traitor, and who art thou? . . It seems to me  
That I should know thee well. Art thou not one  
Of that fantastical and haughty flock  
Of Rama's fanatics?

*Ah.* I wear the ephod :  
I, of the Levites chief, to holy Aaron,  
In that high ministry, to which the Lord  
Elected him, after a long descent  
Of other consecrated priests, succeed.  
Near to the sacred ark in Nob I'm station'd :  
Th' ark of the covenant in former times  
Stood in the centre of the camp ; but now  
'Tis deem'd too much, if e'en clandestinely  
That camp is enter'd by God's minister :  
Where Saul is monarch, a strange visitant  
The priest is held ; but he is not so, no,  
Where Israel fights ; if still, as formerly,  
Through God we triumph. Dost thou not know  
me ?

What wonder ? Dost thou better know thyself?—  
Thou hast withdrawn thy footsteps from God's path ;  
And I within the tabernacle dwell,  
Where dwells the great Jehovah, there, where thou  
For a long time, oh Saul, hast not been seen.  
I tell thee, king, I am Ahimelech.

*Sa.* That name proclaims thee, as thou art, a  
traitor :

Now art thou recognized. Before my sight  
Thou comest opportunely. Now confess,  
Art thou not he, who to the banish'd David  
Gav'st an asylum, nourishment, and safety,  
Deliverance and arms ? And say what arms !  
Goliath's sacred sword, which, dedicate

To God, within the tabernacle hung,  
Whence, with profane hand thou removed'st it,  
And girded'st it on the perfidious foe  
Of thy sole lord and king?—Thou comest, miscreant,  
What doubt is there, with treason to the camp?...

*Ahi.* Assuredly I come there to betray thee;  
Since on thy arms I come to entreat God  
For victory, which he to thee denies;  
Yes, I am he, that, with benignant hand,  
Assisted David. But who is that David?  
Of the king's daughter is not he the husband?  
Not the most valiant 'mid thy men of valour?  
Not the most graceful, most humane, most just,  
Of Israel's sons? Say, is he not in war  
Thy shield, and thy defender? And in peace,  
Is he not in thy palace, with his songs,  
The master of thy heart? The love of maidens,  
The people's joy, the terror of our foes?  
Such, such was he that I presumed to rescue.  
And thou thyself, didst thou not erewhile chuse him  
For the first honours? Not select his arm  
To guide thy battles? To bring back once more  
The shout of victory to the camp? To chase  
That terror of defeat, which in thy heart  
Thy God hath placed? If thou condemnest me,  
Thou, at the same time, dost condemn thyself.

*Sa.* Whence, whence in you springs pity? whence  
in you  
Inveterate priests, revengeful, thirsty ever  
For human blood? To Samuel did it seem  
A crime unpardonable that I slew not  
Th' Amalekitish king, with arms in hand,  
Taken in flight; a mighty king, a warrior,

Of ardent generous temper, and profuse  
 Of his own life-blood in his people's service.  
 Unhappy king ! dragg'd in my presence, he  
 Came manacled ; yet he preserved, though van-  
     quish'd,

A noble pride, as far from insolence,  
 As from all abjectness. Of courage guilty  
 To cruel Samuel he appear'd : three times  
 In his defenceless bosom did he plunge,  
 With sacerdotal hand, the reeking sword.  
 These are your triumphs, these, vile fanatics.  
 But he who dares to lift his haughty brow  
 Against his lawful monarch, he, in you,  
 Finds an asylum, a support, a shield,  
 All other objects occupy your hearts .  
 More than the altar. Who are, who are ye ?  
 A selfish, cruel, and malignant tribe,  
 Who yourselves shelter'd, at our dangers laugh,  
 And kirtled in effeminate robes, presume  
 To govern us who sweat in cumbrous mail :  
 Us, who, 'mid blood-shed, apprehension, death,  
 Lead, for our wives, our children, and yourselves,  
 Lives of perpetuated wretchedness.  
 Cowards, less dignified than prating gossips,  
 Would you with lithe wands, and fantastic hymns,  
 O'er us, and o'er our weapons, arbitrate.

*Ahi.* And thou, who art thou ? of the earth a  
     king :

But in God's sight who reigns ?—Examine, Saul,  
 Thyself ; thou only art crown'd nothingness.—  
 I, by myself am nothing ; but I am  
 A thunderbolt, a whirlwind, and a tempest,  
 If God descends in me ; that mighty God

Who fashion'd thee ; who scarcely bends his eye  
On thee, and where is Saul ?—It ill fits thee  
To plead the cause of Agag ; foolishly  
Dost thou pursue him in forbidden paths.  
For a perverse king, save the hostile sword,  
Is there a punishment ? And does a sword  
Smite unpermitted by Almighty God ?  
God writes his vengeance in adamant ;  
Nor to Philistia's, less than Israel's sons,  
Does he commit them.—Tremble, Saul : I see  
Already in a sable cloud on high,  
Death's dreadful angel poised on fiery wings.  
Already with one hand hath he unheathed  
The pitiless, retributory sword ;  
And with the other, from thy guilty head  
He plucks thy hoary tresses : tremble, Saul.—  
There is who doth impel thee to destruction :  
'Tis he ; this Abner, instrument of Satan ;  
He, who hath poison'd with suspicions vile  
Thy aged heart ; he who hath dwindled thee  
From a crown'd warrior to a less than child.  
Thou, thou infatuate man, dost now remove  
The only true and steadfast prop of thee  
And of thy house. Where is the house of Saul ?  
On quicksands it is built ; it shakes already ;  
It falls ; it moulders into dust ; 'tis gone.—

Sa. Prescient of my calamities art thou,  
And not so of thy own. Hast thou not seen,  
Ere to the camp thou camest, that death here  
Awaited thee ? this I predict ; and soon  
Shall Abner's hand this prophecy fulfil.—  
My faithful Abner go, and change at once  
All the arrangements of the impious David ;

For every one of them conceals a plot.  
To-morrow fight we with the rising sun,  
The beauteous day-star, of my hardihood  
Shall be the witness. I am now aware,  
That from malignity the thought arose  
In David's breast, to chuse the afternoon  
For the attack, as most indicative  
Of my declining arm : but we shall see.—  
I feel my martial spirits braced afresh  
By thy rebukes ; to-morrow I am leader :  
The entire day will be inadequate  
To the great slaughter which I shall inflict.  
Abner, now quickly from my presence drag  
This miscreant, and dispatch him.

*Jon.* I beseech thee,  
Father, reflect a little . . .

*Sa.* Hold thy peace.—  
He shall be slain ; and his unworthy blood  
Shall fall on the Philistines.

*Ab.* Death is his  
Already . . .

*Sa.* But to satisfy my vengeance  
He only is too little. Let Nob feel  
That vengeance also ; let it smite, consume,  
Servants, and cattle, mothers, houses, babes,  
And to the desolating winds disperse  
All the flagitious race. Thy priests may now  
Exclaim with truth, " There is a Saul !"—My hand,  
So oft by you provoked to homicide,  
Never smote you : from hence, and hence alone  
You scorn that hand.

*Ahi.* No king can hinder me  
From dying like a just man ; whence my death

Will be as welcome as it is illustrious.  
 Yours, for a long time, by Almighty God  
 Hath been irrevocably seal'd. By swords,  
 Yet not in battle, not by hostile swords,  
 Abner and thou shall both be vilely slain.  
 Let me go hence.—I have at last address'd  
 God's final sentence to a reprobate,  
 And he is deaf: my mission is accomplish'd:  
 I have lived faithful, faithful shall I die.

*Sa.* Quick let him hence be dragg'd to punishment;  
 To agonizing and protracted death.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Saul, Jonathan.*

*Jon.* Ill-advised king, what art thou doing? pause . .

*Sa.* Must I once more command thee to be silent?—  
 Art thou a warrior? thou a son of mine?

Art thou a champion of the Israelites?  
 Go, go; return to Nob; and there fill thou  
 His empty seat: worthy art thou alone  
 To live in indolence with drowsy priests,  
 Not 'mid the tumults of grim-visaged war,  
 Not 'mid the lofty cares of royalty . . .

*Jon.* I also at thy side in combat fierce  
 Have overcome, in multitudes, thy foes.  
 But this, which now thou dost presume to shed,  
 Is sacerdotal, not Philistine blood.  
 Alone thou standest in a fight so impious . . .

*Sa.* I am alone sufficient for the contest,  
 Whate'er that contest be. Do thou to-morrow  
 Join the encounter with reluctant steps:

I only shall be Saul. What then avail  
David or Jonathan? Saul is the leader.

*Jon.* Beside thee shall I fight. Ah! may I fall  
Lifeless before thine eyes, rather than see  
That which awaits thy reprobated blood!

*Sa.* And what awaits it? death? death in the  
field?

This is a monarch's death.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

*Michal, Saul, Jonathan.*

*Sa.* Thou, without David? . . .

*Mi.* I cannot find him . . .

*Sa.* I will find him.

*Mi.* He

Perhaps is far distant; he avoids thy anger . . .

*Sa.* Though he had wings my anger should o'er-  
take him.

Woe, if in battle he presents himself :

Woe, if to-morrow, when my foes are conquer'd,  
Thou bring'st him not to me!

*Mi.* Oh Heaven!

*Jon.* Ah father . . .

*Sa.* I have no children.—Quickly, Jonathan,  
Resume thy place among the troops. And thou,  
Seek and find David.

*Mi.* Ah! . . . with thee . . .

*Sa.* In vain.

*Jon.* Father, shall I fight far from thee?

*Sa.* From me

Be all of you afar. Ye, all of you,



Vie with each other in betraying me.  
Go, I command it : quickly fly from hence.

## SCENE THE SEVENTH.

*Saul.*

*Sa.* I to myself am left.—Myself alone,  
(Unhappy king !) myself alone I dread not.

## ACT THE FIFTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*David, Michal.*

*Mi.* Come forth, my consort ; come : the night  
already

Is far advanced . . . Listen, what mingled sounds  
Issue from yonder camp ? The fierce encounter  
To-morrow's dawn will witness.—Round the tent  
Where sleeps my father every sound is hush'd.  
Behold ; the heavens themselves assist thy flight :  
The moon is setting, and a black cloud veils  
Her latest rays. Let us depart : no one  
Watches our footsteps now, let us depart :  
We may descend the mountain by this slope,  
And God, where'er we go, will be our guide.

*Da.* Oh spouse, the better portion of myself,  
While Israel is preparing for attack,  
Can it be true that I prepare for flight ?  
And what is death that I should thus avoid it ?  
I will remain : let Saul, if he will, slay me ;  
So that I first in numbers slay the foe.

*Mi.* Ah ! thou know'st not : already hath the rage  
Of Saul in blood his lifted arm embrued.  
Ahimelech, discover'd here, hath fallen  
The victim of his violence already.

*Da.* What do I hear ? Hath he his unsheathed  
sword  
Turn'd on defenceless priests ? Ill-fated Saul !..

*Mi.* Thou must hear more. The monarch gave  
himself  
Cruel command to Abner, that, if thou  
In battle should'st be seen, our champions should  
Against thee turn their arms.

*Da.* And Jonathan,  
My friend, bears this ?

*Mi.* Oh Heaven ! what can he do ?  
He too endured his father's rage ; and ran  
Distractedly 'mid combatants to die.  
Now, thou seest clearly, thou canst not stay here :  
Thou art forced to yield ; to fly from hence ; and  
wait,

Or that my father change, or that he bend  
Beneath the weight of years . . . Ah, cruel father !  
Thou thyself, thou forcest thy wretched daughter  
To wish the fatal day . . . But yet, oh no,  
Thy death I do not wish for : live in peace ;  
Live if thou canst ; 'twill be enough for me  
T' enjoy for ever my loved consort's presence . . .  
Ah, come then ; let us go . . .

*Da.* How much I grieve  
To leave the fight ! I hear an unknown voice  
Cry in my heart, " For Israel and his king  
" The terrible day is come." .. Could I ! .. But no :  
The innocent blood of sacred ministers

Was here pour'd out : the camp is now impure,  
Contaminate is the soil ; the face of God  
Is hence averted : David now no more  
Can combat here. It is my duty, then,  
To yield awhile to thy anxiety,  
And provident love.—But thou too yield to mine . .  
Ah ! suffer me alone . . .

*Mi.* Shall I leave thee ?  
Behold, I clasp thee by thy garment's hem ;  
No, never more I part from thee . . .

*Da.* Ah, hear me !  
Ill could thy tardy steps keep pace with mine :  
Paths, rough with briars and stones, I shall be forced  
To tread with indefatigable feet  
If I would seek, complying with thy wish,  
A place of refuge. How can thy soft limbs  
Bear up against the unaccustom'd torment ?  
And shall I in the wilderness alone  
Ever abandon thee ? Thou seest clearly ;  
Quickly, by thy means, I should be discover'd  
Quickly would both of us be reconducted  
To the fear'd vengeance of the king . . . Oh Heaven !  
The mere thought makes me shudder . . . Further  
grant,

That we ensured our flight, can I take thee  
From thy sick-sorrowing father ? He is placed  
Far from the dainty shelter of his palace,  
Amid the hardships of a camp : his pangs,  
His irritable age, some solace need.  
Ah ! wipe the tear-drops from his furrow'd cheeks,  
His melancholy sooth, his fury lull.  
Thou only pleasest him ; thou waitest on him ;  
And thou alone preservest him alive.

He wishes me destroy'd ; but I wish him  
Rescued from danger, happy, and triumphant . . .  
To-day I tremble for him.—Ere thou wert  
A wife thou wert a daughter : nor canst thou,  
Without delinquency, too much indulge  
Thy love for me.—Provided I escape,  
What further canst thou wish for me at present ?  
Do not withdraw thyself, I pray thee, do not  
From thy already too, too wretched father.  
As soon as I have found a place of refuge,  
I'll cause the tidings to be sent to thee.  
We shall, I hope, be reunited soon.  
Think what it costs me to abandon thee . . .  
But yet ! . . . ah how ? . . .

*Mi.* And must I once more lose thee ?  
Once more permit thee to return alone  
To former sufferings, to a wandering life,  
To perils, and to solitary caves ? . . .  
Ah, if I only always were with thee ! . . .  
I might, perchance, alleviate thy ills  
By sharing them.

*Da.* I do beseech thee, Michal,  
By our affection ; and, if there be need,  
I also do command thee ; inasmuch  
As one that loves, as I do, may command,  
Do not now follow me : thou canst not do it  
Without ensuring my effectual ruin.—  
But if God will my safety, I ought not  
To tarry longer here : the time advances :  
Some spy from his pavilion might detect us,  
And cruelly divulge our purposes.  
I know each bosky covert of this hill,  
And feel most certain that I can elude

All human vigilance.—Give, give me now  
The last embrace. May God be thy support !  
And do thou never, never quit thy father,  
Till Heaven once more unite thee to thy consort . . .

*Mi.* The last embrace?.. And shall I then survive it?..

I feel, I feel my trembling heart-strings burst...

*Da.* And I?... But I beseech thee check thy tears.—

Now imp my feet with wings, Almighty God.

#### SCENE THE SECOND.

*Michal.*

*Mi.* ... He flies!.. Oh heavens... I will pursue him... Ah!

With what invisible fetters am I bound?...

I cannot follow him.—He flies from me!..

Scarce can I stand... much less o'ertake his steps..

Once more then have I lost him!.. Who can tell

When I shall see him? And art thou a wife,

Thou wretched lady?... Were thine nuptial rites?..

No, no; no more beside my cruel father

Will I remain. I follow thee, oh spouse..

Yet if I follow him I cause his death?—

Can I, to feign accordance with his steps,

Dissemble my slow pace?... But from yon camp

What murmur do I hear, like din of arms?..

I hear it plainly... and it waxes louder:

And with the trumpet's dissonance is mix'd:

The tramp of horses also... What is this?

Th' attack before the rising of the sun?

Saul gave no hint of this. Who knows?... Perchance

My brothers... Jonathan... alas... in danger!..  
But tears and howlings and deep groans I hear  
From the pavilion of my father rise?  
Unhappy father!... I will run to meet him..  
But... he himself approaches; how forlorn!..  
How desolate!... How little like himself!..

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Saul, Michal.*

*Sa.* Incensed, tremendous shade, ah quit my  
sight!..

Leave me, oh leave me!... At thy feet I kneel!..  
Where do I fly?.. Where can I hide myself?..  
Oh fierce, vindictive spectre be appeased..  
But to my supplications art thou deaf,  
And dost thou spurn me?.. Burst asunder, earth,  
Swallow me up alive.. Ah! that at least  
The fierce and threatening looks of that dire shade  
May not quite pierce me through..

*Mi.* From whom fliest thou?

No one pursues thee. Dost thou not see me?  
Father, dost thou not know me?

*Sa.* Oh most high,  
Most holy priest, wilt thou that here I pause?  
Oh Samuel, thou my real father once,  
Dost thou command it? Prostrate, see, I fall  
At thy supreme command. Thou, with thy hand,  
Placed'st the royal crown upon this head;  
Thou didst adorn it; strip it, strip it now  
Of all its honours; tread them under foot.—  
But oh... the flaming sword of God's revenge  
Which glares eternally before my eyes..

Thou, who canst do it, snatch it not from me,  
Oh no, but from my children. Of my crime,  
My children they are innocent..

*Mi.* Oh state  
Of agony unparallel'd!—Thy sight  
Bodies forth things that are not: father, turn  
Thyself to me..

*Sa.* Oh joy!.. Is peace inscribed  
Upon thy face? Severe old man, hast thou  
In part my prayers accepted? From thy feet  
I will not rise, till thou hast first deliver'd  
My unoffending children from thy vengeance.—  
What voice exclaim'd, "And David was thy son;  
"And thou pursued'st him, yes... e'en to death."  
Of what dost thou accuse me?... Pause, oh pause..  
David, where is he?... Find him: let him come;  
And let him slay me at his will and reign..  
Provided only that he spare my children,  
Be the throne his.. But art thou pitiless?...  
Thine eyes are orbs of blood; thy hand is fire,  
And fire thy sword; thy ample nostrils breathe  
Sulphureous flames, that glare and dart at me..  
They've caught me now: they burn my heart to  
dust:

Where shall I fly?... or whither find deliverance?

*Mi.* Cannot my hands restrain thee, nor my voice  
Convince thee of the truth? Hear me: thou art..

*Sa.* But no; on this side a prodigious stream  
Of blood restrains my steps.. Atrocious sight!  
On both its shores in mountains are up-piled  
Great heaps of recent corpses: all is death  
On this side: thitherward I then will fly..  
But what do I behold? Who then are ye?—

"We are the children of Ahimelech.

"I am Ahimelech. Die, monarch, die."—

What cry is that? I recognize him well:

With recent blood he reeks; let him drink mine.

And who is this that drags me from behind?

Thou, Samuel, thou?—What did he say? That soon

We all should be with him? I only, I

Shall be with thee; but spare my children . . spare.—

Where am I? . . In an instant from my sight

Have all the spectres vanish'd. Where am I?

What have I said? What am I doing? Who

Art thou? What dissonance is this I hear?

It seems to me most like the din of battle:

But the day dawns not yet: ah yes, it is

War's horrid uproar. Quickly, quickly bring

My shield, my spear, my helmet: now with speed

The weapons, the king's weapons. I will die,

But in the camp:

*Mi.* Father, what art thou doing?

Be tranquil . . to thy daughter . .

*Sa.* I will have

My arms; what daughter? Now thou dost obey me.

My helm, my spear, my shield: these are my children.

*Mi.* I will not leave thee, no . .

*Sa.* The trumpets sound

Louder and louder. Thither let me go:

For me my sword alone will be sufficient.—

Thou, quit my side, depart; obey me: there

The death which I am now pursuing dwells.



## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Saul, Michal, Abner, with a few fugitive Soldiers.*

*Ab.* Oh wretched king!.. Now whither dost thou fly?

This is a dreadful night.

*Sa.* But whence this battle?

*Ab.* The foe assail'd us unawares: we are Wholly discomfited..

*Sa.* Discomfited?

And liv'st thou, traitor?

*Ab.* I? I live to save thee.

Now, now perchance thy foes rush hitherward:

We are compell'd to shun the first attack:

Meanwhile the day will dawn. Thee will I lead,  
With a few followers, to yon upland copses..

*Sa.* Shall I then live, while all my people fall?

*Ab.* Ah come!.. advance... the tumult waxes louder.

*Sa.* My children.. Jonathan.. do they too fly?  
Do they abandon me?

*Ab.* Oh Heaven!.. Thy children..

No, no; they fled not.. Ill-starr'd progeny!..

*Sa.* I understand thee: they are all destroy'd..

*Mi.* Alas!.. My brothers?..

*Ab.* Thou no more hast sons.

*Sa.* What now remains for me?.. Thou, thou alone,

But not for me, remainest.—In my heart

Have I been long time finally resolved:

And now the hour is come.—Abner, the last

Is this of my commands. My daughter now  
Guide to some place of safety.

*Mi.* Father, no;  
Around thee will I twine myself: the foe  
Will never aim a sword against a female.

*Sa.* Oh daughter!... say no more: compel me not  
To weep. A conquer'd king should never weep.  
Save her, oh Abner; go: but if she fall  
Within the enemy's power, say not, oh no,  
That she's the child of Saul, rather assure them  
That she is David's wife; they will respect her.  
Go; fly..

*Ab.* She shall, I swear to thee, be safe,  
If I can aught avail; but thou meantime..

*Mi.* Oh!... father... I will not, I cannot leave  
thee..

*Sa.* I will it; and I yet am king. But see,  
The armed bands approach: Abner, fly hence;  
Drag her by force with thee if it be needful.

*Mi.* Oh father!... and for ever?..

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Saul.*

*Sa.* Oh my children!..  
I was a father.—See thyself alone,  
Oh king; of thy so many friends and servants  
Not one remains.—Inexorable God,  
Is thy retributory wrath appeased?  
But thou remain'st to me, oh sword: now come  
My faithful servant in extremity.—  
Hark, hark! the howlings of the insolent victors;  
The lightening of their burning torches glares

Before my eyes already; and I see  
Their swords by thousands . . —Impious Philistine,  
Thou shalt find me, but like a king, here . . dead.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> As he falls transfixed on his own sword, the victorious Philistines come up to him in a crowd with blazing torches and bloody swords. While these rush with loud cries towards Saul, the curtain falls.

# AGIS.

## A TRAGEDY.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGIS.	<i>Ephori.</i>
LEONIDAS.	<i>Senators.</i>
AGESISTRATA.	<i>People.</i>
AGIZIADE.	<i>Soldiers of Leonidas.</i>
ANPHARUS.	

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SCENE,—The Forum, afterwards the Prison, of  
Sparta.

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### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Leonidas, Ampharus.*

*An.* Behold, Leonidas, thou once more sittest  
Upon thy royal throne. Entirely, Sparta,  
Or of her citizens the better part,  
Those who are really and maturely wise,  
The lovers of the public weal, have turn'd  
Their eyes to thee, expecting, by thy means,  
To gain a respite from their long distress.

*Le.* Yet thence I do not deem, while Agis lives,  
That I am king of Sparta. He not only  
Lives, but reigns also in the hearts of many.  
This temple is to him a place of refuge,

Whose neighbouring portals every day are fill'd  
 With a tumultuary audacious throng,  
 Who yet desire him for their king, and cry  
 For him once more my partner on the throne.

*An.* And fearest thou to be o'ercome by him ?  
 I swear, and all the other ephori  
 Swear likewise, Agis never shall be king.  
 But art is rather needful now than force . .

*Le.* Lately had he such influence acquired,  
 That he had dared, with his contrivances,  
 And with his new and ill-imagined laws,  
 To overturn all Spartan institutes  
 By open force, and from the throne to drive  
 Me into exile : ought I, in that throne,  
 Reseated by my faithful Spartans, now  
 To avenge myself on him by hidden schemes ?

*An.* Thou art compell'd to stoop to stratagems :  
 He is thy son-in-law. The day that thou  
 In cruel banishment, alone, abandon'd,  
 Robb'd of thy royal crown, from Sparta wentest,  
 He shew'd thee kindness. To the fierce assassin,  
 That in pursuit of thee, to spill thy blood,  
 Ageilaus sent, with open force  
 Agis opposed himself, and led thee safe  
 (Thou must remember) to Tegæa's confines :  
 In this one act alone he did not seem  
 The son of Agesistrata, in this  
 Openly adverse to her guilty brother.  
 Thou only now canst prosecute thy vengeance  
 By feign'd concernment for the public good.

*Le.* An infamous gift he made me of my life  
 The day that he expell'd me from the throne ;  
 And as the injury most exquisite,

Should I impute it to him. He deem'd me  
 A foe no longer to be fear'd ! To-day  
 Will I in this entirely undeceive him.  
 That he's my son-in-law, doubles in me  
 My hatred towards him. Son-in-law to me ?  
 Ah ! what was my mistake t' have given to him  
 A lady so dissimilar in marriage ?  
 No reparation but his death remains.  
 Beloved Agiziade, mine only daughter,  
 Thou my companion, my solace thou  
 Wert to me in my dreary exile. She  
 Abandon'd her beloved spouse, since he  
 Was hostile to her father ; she esteem'd  
 The ties of nature more imperative  
 Than those of love : and she would rather drag  
 A wretched wandering life with me, than share  
 The throne with my unworthy adversary.

*An.* Yet in proportion as thy rage is just,  
 Suppress its workings, if thou would'st indulge it.  
 Not less than thee I hate the haughty Agis ;  
 And his parade of antiquated virtues,  
 Feign'd to reflect on us. It is a folly  
 No less ambitious than malevolent,  
 To seek to rivet Sparta with those chains  
 That erst Lycurgus framed : yet his design  
 Has no less scope than this ; hence had his rule  
 Reduced our city to extremity :  
 And yet distracted, languishing she lies,  
 In tumults, and perplexities involved.  
 But all things change with time. Those factious  
     traitors,  
 The ephori, Agesilaus' slaves,  
 And more to him devoted than to Agis,

Are all with him now banish'd or destroy'd,  
And Sparta now in us alone is centred.  
But the flagitious, discontented people,  
Always desirous of new men and measures,  
Yet, as a means to their pernicious views,  
Their suffrage give to Agis. Ill can we  
Restrain them by mere force ; it is not safe  
In a new government to use coercion.  
The people may, with less of peril, be  
Deluded than compell'd. Leave thou to me  
This enterprise, in which, not less than thine,  
My heart an interest takes. But here, behold  
Comes Agesistrata. This lady makes  
Fresh progress in th' affections of the Spartans  
From day to day : she also should be fear'd.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Agesistrata, Leonidas, Anpharus.*

*Agis.* Who interrupts my progress ? While I go  
To the asylum of the Spartan monarch,  
Around these confines do I not behold  
Another, and new king of Sparta stalk ?

*Le.* And had I an asylum in the world  
On that disastrous day, when Sparta's king  
From Sparta I was driven ? For a long time  
I lived in exile from the throne ; and lived,  
Which is far worse, apparently a culprit.  
Grief would have slain me, if my innocence,  
Together with my usurp'd majesty,  
Had not been fully to myself restored  
By wiser councils of that very Sparta.  
Cleombrotus, my execrable rival,

Banish'd from Sparta, he, to whom thy son,  
Master of all things then, my sceptre gave,  
Himself made my defence. To publish his,  
Why delays Agis? He was on the throne  
My colleague; yet he is my daughter's consort;  
And may, if so it please him, be my foe.—  
But say, what other cause except his guilt  
Detains him now imprison'd in the temple?

*Ages.* Leonidas, to Sparta and to me  
Thou art but too well known: what are thy faults,  
And what are those of Agis, is express'd  
In a few words. Agis wish'd Sparta free;  
Equal her citizens, courageous, strong,  
And terrible: true Spartans: and he wish'd,  
Not to be paramount to any man,  
Except in magnanimity and virtue.  
Rich, mercenary, sunk in indolence,  
Effeminate, by party spirit torn,  
Such as she is in short, Leonidas  
Desired her still to be. To guilt ascribed  
Are Agis' purposes, because the bad  
In Sparta o'er the good preponderate;  
Those of Leonidas ascribed to virtue,  
Because they are adapted to the times.  
To-day, at least, remember if thou canst,  
That my son shew'd himself the open foe  
Of thy power only, never of thy person;  
Reflect that now thou would'st not live, if he,  
More citizen than king, had not preserved,  
And perhaps to his own detriment, thy life.

*Le.* 'Tis true, that Agis, perhaps in spite of thee,  
On that same day on which thy cruel brother  
Sent vile assassins to destroy my life,



By other satellites, to him attach'd,  
 Preserved me living, and exempt from wounds :  
 But can a banish'd king, of throne bereft,  
 Bereft of honour and of innocence,  
 By a fierce rival, his ill-granted life  
 Ascribe to generous impulses of pity ?

*Ages.* The gift was no less noble than imprudent :  
 Agis himself so deem'd it ; but innate  
 Is magnanimity in that great heart.  
 Th' illustrious Agis would not, with thy blood,  
 Contaminate the enterprise, at once  
 Unparallel'd and generous, of a king,  
 Resolved spontaneously to reinstate  
 His people in illimitable freedom.  
 I ne'er dissuaded him from pardoning thee ;  
 And perhaps should have attempted it in vain :  
 Mother of Agis, could I e'er betray  
 A heart less high than that of such a son ?  
 'Tis true, I call Agesilaus brother ;  
 But now of such a name he is unworthy.  
 With florid eloquence, and specious virtues,  
 Covering his irreclaimable corruption,  
 Agis and Sparta, and with these myself,  
 He hath deceived . . .

*Le.* Never Leonidas.

*Ages.* He was thy counterpart, and thence well  
 known.

To take for ever from the creditors  
 And debtors, from the rich and mendicants,  
 Their Anti-Spartan names, Agesilaus,  
 More than all other men, persuaded Agis.  
 Seeing himself by our example forced  
 To sacrifice his riches, and subdued

By brutal avarice, disgracing thus  
Th' ephori's sacred function, he forbade  
The high participation. Hence the people,  
Confused, and more oppress'd, in doubt and fear  
Betwixt their not extinguish'd servitude,  
And their confounded, scarce reviving freedom,  
Recall'd thee to the throne : and chose in thee  
A worthy instrument to prop once more  
Their soft, incurably corrupted customs.  
That very people, to thy hands gave bound  
Cleombrotus, erewhile elected king :  
That very people to the custody  
Of an asylum only relegates  
Agis, their monarch once so idolized.

*An.* Far more is he protected by the laws,  
Than by this his asylum. Though he be  
Th' annuller and subverter of those laws,  
Yet does he owe to them and us his safety.  
To us, true ephori, before all Sparta,  
Will he be challenged to defend himself :  
Provided he can prove his innocence,  
He need not fear the monarch or his people.

*Le.* If in his heart he is not self-accused,  
Whence this asylum ? Why not summon me  
To an impartial judgment at the just  
And popular tribunal ?

*Ages.* Because thou  
Dost render it (of virtue destitute)  
Thy instrument with bribery and arms.  
Because thou dost return full of revenge,  
Which that tribunal too well knows : in short,  
Because thy new, not Spartan ephori,  
Other than legal terrors fulminate.

My Agis knows not fear ; but he would snatch  
Himself from infamy ; which evermore  
He who usurps authority, on others  
Can, for a transient space at least, bestow.

*Lc.* What will thy Agis do then ? He cannot  
Now longer keep himself conceal'd, if he  
Fear real infamy.

*An.* Much less can Sparta,  
In her existing strange vicissitudes,  
Endure the loss of one of her two kings.  
Agis still bears the name, yet he performs not  
The necessary functions of a king :  
Meanwhile within its ramparts, and without  
Sparta is insecure ; its institutes  
Are all despised ; and there is need . . .

*Ages.* Of Agis ;  
And with him need of every thing that's good .  
The enemies of Sparta know this truth  
As well as we, in whose breasts Agis only  
Reviv'd a terror of our arms. Yes, Agis,  
The beardless Agis, made the Ætolians tremble,  
On whom the great Aratus, hoary leader,  
Made no impression with his fierce Achaians.  
I do conjure thee now, Leonidas,  
To undertake no scheme for his destruction.  
For notwithstanding fate, often unjust,  
Should crown thy efforts now in the attempt,  
From thence would'st thou in course of time entail  
Heavy disgrace and blame upon thyself,  
And on thy country lasting detriment.  
A know not whether country be to thee  
A sacred name ; but among us it is  
A name so strong and paramount to all,

That if a fleeting doubt rose in my heart  
Whether the thoughts, much more the deeds of Agis,  
Were all directed to the good of Sparta,  
I, though his mother, I would first implore  
Against my son, in all its plenitude,  
The inexorable rigour of the laws.

Act thou then now according to thy judgment,  
Nor Agis, nor who brought him into life,  
Save for their country and their countrymen  
Can ever tremble : thou, although in arms,  
And in a prosperous state, within thy heart  
Self-conscious, tremble for thyself alone.

*Le.* Lady, thou art a mother, and of one  
Thou art a mother who possess'd the sceptre,  
Hence I excuse thee. Fear in you dwells not ;  
So say'st thou. May its absence be auspicious ;  
But the ephori and Sparta, and myself  
Give to you only one whole day to prove  
This innocence of yours, for ever vaunted,  
And never proved. Let him at last come forth,  
And exculpate himself ; and even me,  
If so he will, let him accuse : his choice,  
Except in reference to this asylum,  
Is free in all things else. But say to him,  
If he persist to sequester himself,  
That Sparta by to-morrow's dawn no more  
Deems him her king, and I no more a colleague.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Agesistrata, Anpharus.*

*An.* He speaks embitter'd by his recent exile :  
But Sparta doth not share in his resentments.

Thou shouldest, thou, to whom alike are dear  
 Agis and Sparta, strive to adapt thy son  
 To times like these, and inculcate compliance . . .

*Agis.* To compromise his honour, not myself,  
 Nor you, nor Sparta, ever could induce him.  
 That the king's rage is not the rage of Sparta,  
 The throng immense of Spartans in fresh troops,  
 Round his asylum every day assembled,  
 Sufficiently convince me, who call him,  
 With loud, audacious, and intrepid cries,  
 Preserver, sovereign-citizen, and father ;  
 Second deliverer, a new Lycurgus.  
 His virtue must indeed be eminent,  
 Since Sparta thus dare praise him at her peril ;  
 Since admiration of that excellence  
 Greater effects in Sparta can produce  
 Than all the terror of your arm'd adherents.

*An.* The people gather into crowds, and shout,  
 Yet nothing they attempt : nor will their vile  
 And turbulent deportment aught effect,  
 Except increasingly to exasperate  
 The good against thy son. Thou canst do much,  
 Mother of Agis, on the Spartan people ;  
 On Agis canst do more : the first induce,  
 (I pray thee hear) to cease from turbulence ;  
 The second, for a little time at least,  
 To adapt himself to time and circumstance.  
 If thy son's good, and if the good of all  
 Thou dost desire, 'tis ill, thou know'st, ensured  
 By civil violence and rabid strife.—  
 If thou refusest, in a cause like this,  
 Warmly to exert thyself, not wrongfully,  
 Leonidas, and Sparta, and myself,

Will execrate you as domestic foes ;  
 Then, then 'will irrefragably appear  
 That all your ample wealth, a tribute large,  
 Was with malignant purposes relinquish'd  
 To purchase in reversion for yourselves  
 Supremacy, and not equality.  
 The fame of lofty efforts, good or bad,  
 On the event depends. Let not your deeds,  
 Magnanimous and generous (if they are,)  
 Receive a taint from other men's suspicions,  
 Which tax you now with probable repentance  
 For such a mighty gift ; and further tax you  
 With a design large harvest thence to reap.  
 I, as a magistrate and citizen,  
 Not as a foe, lay every thing before thee :  
 On you alone it afterwards depends  
 To take what measures seem the most expedient.

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Agesistrata.*

*Ages.* Fain would these men gain time ; but time  
 shall not  
 Be granted to them. Ah, the suavity  
 Of Anpharus, so subtly feign'd ; the rage  
 Of fierce Leonidas, with pain repress'd, -  
 Too manifestly indicate to me  
 The destiny of Agis and of Sparta.  
 Let nothing now be left untried to save them ;  
 And if our country's angry gods with blood  
 Alone can be appeased, myself and Agis  
 Will for that country die ; we're born to serve her.  
 May Sparta from our ashes rise once more.

## ACT THE SECOND.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Agis.*

*Agis.* Ye pitying gods, who have till now been  
pleased

To rescue from Leonidas's rage  
My well-known innocence, no more can I  
Remain within your temple. I from you  
Sought an asylum, that my infirm country  
Might not be forced t' endure more violence,  
More slaughter, and more broils : now there are those  
Who dare ascribe this step to my misdeeds,  
And to the terror of just punishment.  
Behold, at once the asylum I relinquish.—  
Oh Sparta, Sparta ! . . . To thy true deliverers . .  
Must thou be ever fatal ? Ah, to me  
Were but the fate allow'd that once befell  
Thy first illustrious father ! Not content  
With everlasting exile, on himself  
Inflicted by Lycurgus, I would chuse  
Further, ignoble death, if by that death  
I might at least behold with thee revive  
The pristine vigour of thy sacred laws ! . .  
But who so quickly comes to this asylum ? . .  
Whom do I see ? Oh heavens ! Agiziade ! . .  
The daughter of Leonidas ! . . Alas ! . .  
That consort, who, although so well beloved,  
Yet for her father's sake abandon'd me !

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Agis, Agiziade.*

*Agis.* What do I see? My Agis, hast thou ventured

To leave the asylum? Speedily I came  
To find thee there . .

*Agis.* Whate'er thou wert towards me,  
My still beloved consort, why dost thou  
Thus bend thy steps towards a wretched husband?

*Agis.* Scarce can I speak, oh Agis. . . I return  
To thee, with thy embitter'd, alter'd fate.  
Thy mournful state, and that alone, had power  
To tear me from my father. On the day  
That I was forced, oh consort, to abandon  
My children, and thyself, that I might not  
Suffer my father, in his wretched exile,  
To go from us a lonely fugitive,  
I felt my heart as if asunder torn :  
Nor would'st thou ever have beheld me more,  
I now confess to thee, in Sparta's soil,  
If to the cruel shafts of adverse fortune  
He had remain'd obnoxious. Once more he  
Is raised on high ; thou, in thy turn, depress'd.  
Who, who could now dissever me from thee ?  
With all my heart do I to thee return :  
And I conjure thee, by my unfeign'd love ;  
(For thine, I know not if I yet possess it ;)  
By those loved children once to thee so dear ;  
And further I conjure thee by thy country,  
To which thou art so loftily devoted,  
To grant at least a respite for the present



To thy new institutes. May love of peace,  
The first of benefits, to this induce thee :  
Be pleased to reassume, as heretofore,  
In strict conjunction with Leonidas,  
Supreme controulment of the Spartan state.

*Agis.* Lady, who could that fondness ever blame  
Thou bear'st thy father? Thou canst never know  
him ;

This is not thy prerogative : most good,  
Most fond, most pious, most accomplish'd, thou,  
In these corrupted times, a rare example  
Of pristine conjugal and filial love ;  
Feel'st no solicitude except to be  
The generous partner of his destiny  
Whom adverse fortunes persecutes the most.  
If thou wert ever dear to me, to see thee  
To-day return to me when all men fly,  
Makes thee to me more dear. From thy great heart  
Less I expected not : I only fear'd  
That with his happiness intoxicate,  
Leonidas perchance might interdict  
Thy quitting him for me.

*Agis.* Just were thy fears.

Since Sparta as a conqueror received him  
Three days have past ; three days have also past  
That I have combated with him for thee.  
Nor, since I could not his consent obtain,  
Was I less firm, whate'er the risk might be,  
To join thee here. Himself, at length compliant,  
A little while ago to thee would send me  
A messenger of peace : he, by my lips,  
Now proffers it to thee without reserve ;  
He begs thee and conjures thee, that thou wilt,

(Abandoning thy retreat,) in concert with him,  
Adopt all means whence Sparta may obtain  
Henceforth entire indissoluble peace.

*Agis.* Doth he send thee to me? This change, so  
sudden,

Permits the indulgence of no joyful hope.

What do I say? If in himself he hope not,  
Can *Agis* hope? What more remains for me  
To fear, when my poor country every day  
Is more enslaved?—more, every day, remote  
From her primæval eminence, her great,  
Illustrious, and immortalizing virtues?

I had already of my own accord

Abandon'd my retreat: far other motives

Had now induced me to anticipate

The crafty wishes of Leonidas . .

Ah! this will be a memorable day

To Sparta and to me; fatal perchance

To thee, if thou dost love me . . I cannot,

Oh my beloved consort, doubt of this . .

But, if thou hearkenest to my upright words,

Do not thou, worthy of a better father,

I do beseech thee, irritate in vain

His captious soul. Live for thy children's sake;

Against the rage of fierce Leonidas

Be thou to them a shield: those lofty thoughts

Which I have ever shared with thee, and which

Thou feltest so profoundly, fortified

By other lofty ones in thee innate,

Which are the source sublime of filial love,

Do thou in them transfuse, that they may live

The glory of their father and their country.

Athirst for vengeance do I not expire,

But Spartan virtues panting to restore :  
Provided that they one day may arise,  
Although in distant times, from sons of mine,  
With this my spirit will be satisfied ..

*Agis.* My heart thou rendest .. Why thus speak of death ?

*Agis.* Thou art a Spartan, and the wife of Agis ;  
Refrain from tears. My blood may serve my country ;

My tears cannot serve thee. Ah, dry thine eyes ;  
Compel me not to weep ..

*Agis.* I know full well  
The bitter agonies of thy sublime,  
Devoted heart ; thy upright, generous schemes  
Within my breast profoundly are engraved ;  
And if in their complete accomplishment  
The entire and lofty ruin of my father  
Were not involved, e'en at the risk of life,  
Would'st thou find me first ready to promote them ..  
How oft have I lamented o'er that father,  
So different to thee ! How oft have I  
Wept that I was his daughter ! Yet, alas !  
I was indeed, and am .. and 'twixt you two  
I live distracted, and I ought to be  
The means of amity betwixt you both,  
Or ought to die.

*Agis.* If thou in other times,  
From other blood hadst been in Sparta born,  
Daughter of Sparta, mother of true Spartans  
Thou would'st have been. Yet thy not Spartan father  
I would not as a crime to thee impute.  
Prompted by thy most generous, lofty heart,  
But not well disciplined, I heard thy lips

Pronounce thy father's and thy consort's names,  
But not thy country's. Yet why should I wonder,  
If thou art more a daughter and a wife  
Than citizen? Whate'er thou art, I love thee;  
Nor any force, save that of my example,  
To thy not Spartan feelings would I use.  
Hence I conjure thee by our love, yea, more,  
If it be needful, I command, that thou  
Should'st manifest to-day that thou art yet  
E'en more a mother than a wife or daughter.—  
But whence this horrible tumult that approaches?  
What crowd is this? what cries? oh heaven! my  
mother!  
And a great multitude of people arm'd  
Pursues her steps!

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Agis, Agesistrata, Agixiade, People.*

*Ages.* My son, and what, hast thou  
Left thy retreat? In whom dost thou confide?  
In the base daughter of Leonidas?  
Behold, I bring thee a more certain succour;  
These will at any moment be prepared . . .

*Agis.* Oh mother, thou should'st better know thy  
son :

I in myself, or else in no one, trust.  
She whom thou call'st Leonidas's daughter,  
Is both my wife and friend, and one with me.—  
Spartans, if ye indeed are such, whom now  
I, at the risk of my renown, behold  
Tumultuously menacing in arms;  
Spartans, now Agis speaks to you : no arms

in my favour, ever will endure  
 against my country. I seek no protection ;  
 for fear I any man. I well suffice  
 to authenticate my perfect innocence :  
 to make that innocence completely triumph  
 'er other's malice, not with arms indeed,  
 but with more firm resolves, ye might yourselves  
 just support *one day* have given to me :  
 but *now*, too late and vain, and (which is worse)  
 illicit, would your interference be.

*Agis.* And would'st thou then expose thyself un-  
 arm'd

to the malign rage of Leonidas ?  
 to the bribed ephori's perfidious snares ?  
 Ah ! I endure it not, nor these true sons  
 of Sparta will endure it, who are all  
 now ready for their king to yield their lives.

*People.* Yes, we are all ready to die for Agis.

*Agis.* Agis and Sparta heretofore were one ;  
 how are they thoroughly by fate disjoin'd ;  
 how that, perchance, 'tis indispensable  
 that Agis perish to make Sparta safe.  
 blood should be never spill'd ; much less when blood  
 cannot regenerate virtue. Ye cannot  
 now die for me, without the sacrifice  
 of many others : and your own lives here,  
 and those of others equally, are all  
 not yours, but the possession of your country.  
 here are, I know, in multitudes there are,  
 misguided citizens : but to restore them  
 to the straight path of duty I prepare  
 a reconciliatory sacrifice.

With this can I compel them to amendment ;

With this make you with fervour more intense  
The worshippers of self-renouncing virtue.

*Agi.* Oh wretched me ! Thou mak'st me tremble.  
Speak.

What dost thou now intend ?

*Ages.* Lady, for whom  
Are these thy fears, thy husband or thy father ?

*Agis.* Mother, thou know'st not how it wounds  
my heart

To hear thee thus irreverently taunt  
My faithful wife. She has this instant made  
Herself, with her true filial piety,  
More dear to me than ever yet she was.—  
Mother, and wife, and citizens, attend.—  
I have resolved within my inmost heart  
To make malignancy itself confess,  
The most invidious, and the most depraved,  
That I'm a real lover of my country.

A king, a father, and a citizen,  
And nothing else have I to Sparta been ;  
At least if I am not deceived : in others  
Perhaps I myself, with violence, inspired  
At first some misconception of myself.  
This choice of an asylum thence was not  
To wisdom in me, but a guilty conscience,  
And terrors of just punishment, ascribed.  
Thence *Agis* of a vulgar king endured  
The insufferable stigma. But to-day,  
Such as it is, my heart shall be reveal'd.  
Oh welcome, yes, thrice welcome, is the danger  
Which I am forced to encounter, to make clear  
The good which I attempted to effect,  
And of those men whose interest is in evil

The circumventive and invidious malice !  
I well knew how to prove myself a king,  
And dared to do it, for the public good ;  
And for my private good I also dare  
Become once more a private citizen.  
Not that I hope at present to convince  
The countless disaffected ; they in heart  
Already are too much so ; but I ought  
Now in the presence of collected Sparta,  
To cover them with shame and infamy.  
They would, and still I hope they will, accuse me :  
I rather with my actions, than with words,  
Shall undertake to exculpate myself.  
First would I unreservedly to Sparta  
Promulgate my intentions, then submit . . .

*People.* Agis submit ! No, never ! All of us  
Will make those traitors listen to thy words . . .

*Agis.* Not you, oh no ! Truth, from my lips alone,  
Shall make me by unwilling ears be heard.  
And if my honour in your sight is dear ;  
If I have any thing from you deserved ;  
If there is aught in me ; or if, at least,  
Ye, from the recollection of my deeds,  
For something hope, I supplicate, exhort,  
Nay, I command you, to lay down your arms,  
And to the ephori, whate'er they be,  
To render, with myself, submission due.  
The king of Persia, when he finds that foes  
Are risen against himself within his realm,  
Accosts them with compulsory weapons ;  
But Sparta's monarch doth esteem himself  
E'en to his enemies accountable :  
At first he strives to baffle calumny

With arguments ; but if in vain, he meets it  
 With the immoveable calmness of a king.—  
 I grieve that, and eternally shall grieve,  
 The same Leonidas, who thus assails me,  
 Unheard and exiled, from your city went.  
 Perchance his cause he could not have defended ;  
 Perchance he would not have attempted it ;  
 But for this purpose I should have allow'd him  
 Ample convenience. My guilty colleague,  
 Agesilaus, was resolved on force ;  
 My opposition ineffectual proved.  
 Few are aware of this : hence he and I  
 In the same imputation are involved.  
 I from thenceforth discover'd, though too late,  
 That he was only a dissembling Spartan :  
 But time press'd on me, and the lofty wish  
 To effect the good, to which the banishment  
 Of fierce Leonidas (its chiefest hindrance)  
 Seem'd to prepare the way. His exile, hence,  
 Just, but inflicted in an unjust manner,  
 I tolerated for the good of Sparta.

*People.* And who knows not that thou didst save  
 his life ?

*Agi.* Yes, by his means alone my father yet  
 Enjoys the breath of life. Myself beheld  
 The cruel danger which surrounded him ;  
 The assassins of Agesilaus now  
 Had almost in their snares entangled him,  
 When opportunely Agis' partizans  
 Dispersed them, and deliver'd us unhurt.

*Ages.* Leonidas to-day would hence repay him,  
 By wresting from him not his life alone,  
 But his fame also.



*Agis.* To effect this purpose  
The tyrant has no power : on me alone,  
And on my deeds, my fame depends.

*Ages.* The firm  
And persevering project to oppress thee,  
The jealousy of others, from thy deeds  
Solely arise. But Anpharus comes hither,  
The friend and colleague worthy of the tyrant.

*Agis.* Let him be heard.

*Agi.* Oh heavens ! for thee I tremble . . .

#### SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Agis, Agesistrata, Agiziade, Anpharus, People.*

*An.* Far from thy refuge, Agis, in the midst  
Of such a throng, I did not think to find thee.  
But yet more grateful witnesses than these  
I could not wish to meet. I hither come  
The will of Sparta to unfold to thee.

*Agis.* It is . . .

*An.* Pacific.

*Agis.* How ?

*An.* It breathes true peace,  
If peace be not too adverse to thy views ;  
Or if at once security and greatness  
Thou dost not seek in turbulence and discord.

*Agis.* I ought not now to clear myself to thee :  
Perhaps before them to whom I owe the homage,  
Of this I shall acquit myself. Meanwhile,  
What is this peace Leonidas proposes ?

*An.* Am I the monarch's messenger ? I am  
One of the ephori ; in Sparta's name  
Do I address thee. If thou now consent

To yield submission to the citizens,  
(The true and wise ones,) and restore once more  
Peace to the city, each new law of thine  
Thyself condemning, Sparta, by my lips,  
To-day restores to thee thy royal seat,  
Which thou hast abdicated by thy flight.

*Ages.* Agis . . .

*Agis.* I am thy son, oh mother ; now  
On me rely.—Thou, that in Sparta's name,  
So that I make myself unworthy of it,  
Offerest to me the throne, I pray thee take  
This answer to Leonidas, that I  
Would speak with him, ere to collected Sparta  
I solemnly and finally appeal.

*Agis.* I do beseech thee to my father go,  
Oh Anpharus, and urge him to compliance.  
Make him remember that he would not now  
Be blest with life, had it not been for Agis ;  
That he to Agis as a consort gave  
His much-loved only daughter . . .

*Agis.* Nothing else  
Make him remember, than that we are both  
The citizens of Sparta ; and that now  
The interest of all obliges him  
To grant me audience.

*An.* It is most uncertain  
Whether he can or will confer with thee,  
Till he has learn'd if his proposed conditions  
Are by thyself rejected or embraced.

*Agis.* He can, on no account, nor will he do it,  
Refuse to hear me. I, from henceforth, quit  
For ever my asylum : round my person  
No train do I permit.—Spartans, to you

Do I authoritatively exclaim,  
 Here, undefended, innocent, alone,  
 Will I remain.—Anpharus,<sup>1</sup> witness thou;  
 The time, the place, the circumstance, all now  
 Will be most opportune. Ere it be long,  
 I to this forum will return; and here  
 May the king not disdain to come to me.  
 I shall be here alone; but let him have  
 His satellites beside him; we shall be  
 By all the citizens of Sparta seen,  
 But shall not be by any of them heard.

*An.* Since thou wilt have it so, I quickly fly  
 To bear the tidings to Leonidas.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Agis, Agesistrata, Agixiade.*

*Agis.* Well did I know with what a bait t' entice  
 him.—

Now, ladies, to my dwelling and my children  
 Let me return with you. I shall enjoy  
 A few brief, final moments, in your presence,  
 Of private consolation, till I join  
 This fatal conference.

*Ag.* Oh heaven!...

*Ages.* Oh son!

What canst thou hope from this perfidious king?

*Agis.* He grasps the fate of Sparta; and canst thou,  
 Oh mother, ask what Agis hopes from him?

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<sup>1</sup> The people here retire, and disperse.

## ACT THE THIRD.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Agis.*

*Agis.* Leonidas yet comes not : he perchance  
Disdains the challenge ? He dare not : here shame,  
If nothing else, should bring him now. Erewhile  
The people heard the generous invitation,  
That I, by Anpharus, dispatch'd to him :  
Many considerations yet restrain him,  
Many and powerful ; many apprehensions,  
Though he be victor, lurk within his heart.  
Ah, could I, could I, by his fears promote  
The interest of Sparta ! . . But at length  
He comes ; oh ! does he thus appropriate  
A royal retinue ? It fits him well.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Agis, Leonidas, Soldiers.*

*Agis.* Oh king, or ere another task begins,  
Thou com'st to hear me ? . .

*Le.* Yes, I come to hear thee . . .

*Agis.* Then, I demand to speak to thee alone . . .

*Le.* Withdraw.<sup>1</sup>—I am alone : I listen to thee.

*Agis.* I speak not to thee as thy daughter's husband :

Though, beyond all expression, I adore  
A wife who is the paragon of daughters.

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<sup>1</sup> The soldiers retire.

*Le.* She was, 'tis true, a powerful tie betwixt us,  
Ere thou from Sparta drov'st me into exile.

*Agis.* I know it : nor should I now mention it,  
Since I refrain'd from speaking of it then.  
Not that I then forgot it, this thou knowest ;  
But thoughts of Sparta then my speech inspired,  
Whose bidding silenced, and still silences,  
In me all other impulses.—Thou, king  
Of Sparta, art my foe : but if thou art  
Not so of Sparta, I to-day demand,  
And from the gods, protectors of my country,  
Hope to obtain, an eloquence so strong,  
So true, and lofty, that thou may'st by me  
The prompt and certain method now be taught,  
Whence to obtain perchance beyond thy wishes . . .

*Le.* Beyond my wishes ? Know'st thou what I  
wish ?

*Agis.* Vengeance on me, before all other things.  
Thou wishest, and shalt have it ; I to thee  
Will give it thoroughly. Thy second wish  
Is lasting power, and I will point to thee  
Its certain source. Nor satisfied with this ;  
A method, lofty and infallible,  
I offer to thee, whence thou may'st acquire  
Another blessing, to which perhaps thy thoughts  
Have ne'er aspired : and it is such, that thou  
(Provided it be easy to obtain)  
Canst not despise it. Permanent, immense,  
This will I gain thee yet . . .

*Le.* And it is ? . .

*Agis.* Fame.—

*Le.* Thou art rather fitted to prevent, than give it.—  
With me the throne thou filledst ; never then  
Didst thou concur with me for Sparta's good,

Or for our common glory : thou alone  
Thought'st of thy private interest, and to make  
Thyself a name upon the wreck of mine :  
Hence Sparta to extremity, and me  
To exile, thou didst goad. I do not mean  
To take revenge for this ; I ought, indeed,  
To exact it now for lacerated Sparta ;  
But a true love of peace checks me in this :  
Peace, which thy colleagues in iniquity,  
Although in vain, are ready to disturb.  
The love of peace, in short, induces me  
To offer to thee now, in Sparta's name,  
Pardon entire . . .

*Agis.* Entire ? It is too much.—

Come, no one hears us here ; what boots deceit ?  
Thou thinkest that I do not read thy heart ;  
Thou canst not make me think that heart is changed.  
I think, however, that to take from me  
The power and sceptre, would not now suffice  
To make thee fully on the throne secure.  
Thou knowest well that while I live thou canst not  
Install another colleague thy liege vassal :  
But neither dar'st thou at the same time slay me,  
Because thou'rt well aware that in the hearts  
Of many still I reign. Behold thy true,  
And most-conceal'd reflections : now hear mine.—  
Within th' asylum I inclosed myself  
Against my will ; spontaneously I quit it ;  
And force to force, if I were so inclined,  
I might oppose : art to oppose to art,  
I neither have the skill, nor will to do it.  
That to defend my cause, I will not spill  
A drop of Spartan blood, thou shouldest now

Be well convinced. Thou seest me now alone :  
 I in thy power am placed : behold me now  
 A suppliant for my country. I am ready  
 To yield to thee for her not life alone,  
 But also fame.

*Lc.* Hast thou this fame of thine  
 Unspotted, which thou dar'st to offer me ?

*Agis.* Unspotted, yes, throughout ; and worthy  
 Agis ;

And too illustrious for thy envious eyes.  
 Me thou abhorrest ; Sparta I adore :  
 Now hear how thou at once may'st gratify  
 Thy hatred and my love. I undertook,  
 By equalizing all the citizens,  
 In Sparta to revive true liberty,  
 Greatness, and virtue. With the most depraved  
 Thou never ceasedst to oppose thyself,  
 Although in vain ; and not that thou in this  
 Didst never see the common benefit,  
 Immense and unalloy'd ; not that pure truth,  
 With her divine resplendence, did not find,  
 Alas ! without inflaming it, a passage  
 To thy resisting heart : but in that heart,  
 The love of gold, and arbitrary power,  
 Wither'd at once all patriotic thoughts,  
 Baffled the cry of truth, the vital warmth,  
 And permeating influence of virtue.  
 The universal, genuine voice of Sparta  
 Removed thee from thy throne, proclaiming thee  
 Thy country's foe : nor didst thou even try  
 T' impugn the insupportable reproach.  
 In exile afterwards, proscribed, and wandering,  
 Thou knowest well thou hadst been vilely slain ;

I hinder'd it : nor do I now say this  
To thee upbraidingly, but to afford  
No dubious evidence, that not thy ruin,  
But lofty Spartan actions were indeed  
Alone the object of my lofty schemes.

*Lc.* And of a fatal inadvertency  
Must thou reproach thyself in saving me.

*Agis.* And thou wilt make for this, by slaying me,  
Ample atonement. Only do thou learn  
Of me the means for this.—To liberty,  
More than to tyranny, is Sparta inclined :  
Of this be thou assured, though for the present  
Thou hast imposed on her the kingly yoke.  
A transient indignation of the many  
Against the infamous Agesilaus,  
Hath now replaced thee on the throne, and driven  
Him from the ephori : there are who now  
Deem me a partner in his crimes, and not  
Entirely without cause, while I am silent.  
Do not thou goad me on to clear myself  
Of such reproach effectually ; 'twould be  
Most easy to demonstrate, that the king  
Betray'd at once both Sparta and myself :  
If I make this to all men clear, then thou  
Canst not, without much injury to thyself,  
Use violence towards me.

*Lc.* Thou thinkest so ?

*Agis.* Thou knowest it. But do not fear. I wish'd  
To be the Spartan monarch of true Spartans ;  
Thee I leave king of these. No force of thine  
Avails to make me guilty : I will, I,  
Make myself culpable before all Sparta ;  
Will yield thee the entire ascendancy



Over myself; will make thee really great  
Against thy will, provided thou aspire  
To greatness.

*Le.* Thou in vain insultest me . . .

*Agis.* Do thou thyself, yes now, accomplish that  
For Sparta, and her glory's sake, which I  
Audaciously attempted. From the throne  
Do thou once more promulgate not my laws,  
But the free, sacred, lofty, manly ones  
Of great Lycurgus : banish poverty  
At once with wealth ; she is the child of wealth :  
Resign thy riches ; equalize the people ;  
Become thyself a Spartan, and at once  
Spartans create : . . this purposed I to do ;  
Do thou accomplish it, and snatch from me  
Th' eternal glory of the enterprise.—  
If thou wilt swear to me to accomplish this,  
Thou before Sparta as a criminal  
May'st drag me now ; and say I made a plea  
Of public good to screen my private views ;  
And say, that though my purposes were guilty,  
My laws were not so. Thou shalt add to this,  
That thou thyself, with a more upright mind,  
And greater singleness of heart, once more  
The glory of thy city wilt renew.  
Then in the presence of collected Sparta  
Shall I confess myself deserving death ;  
Shall I confess that the enormities,  
The wrongs Agesilaus dared commit,  
From me derived their origin ; that I  
In him a harbinger of tyranny  
Dared to create ; that I, by his means, sought  
To make a trial of degenerate Sparta.

This doubtless will suffice. Death, which thou canst  
not,

Except by treachery, now inflict on me,  
(Thou seest,) from my fellow citizens  
Thou wilt obtain it thus, and it will seem  
To them most just. I thus divest myself  
Of that same fame which thou canst not take from  
me,

Which gives thee umbrage, and to thee resign it.  
I die, thou reignest ; both will be contented.  
The throne will not invalidate thy fame ;  
Though to the tomb I carry infamy,  
Still unimpair'd to that tomb shall I bear  
My only hope, that Sparta by that means  
Shall rise again to renovated life.

*Le.* Dost deem me so corrupt ?

*Agis.* I deem thee great ;  
Since I account thee fit to consummate  
My mighty projects . . .

*Le.* Shall I lend a hand  
To thy pernicious, impious designs ? . .

*Agis.* Thou wilt be utterly from envy freed  
When I am dead ; and thou may'st then fulfil,  
To thy advantage, and to that of Sparta,  
My mighty purposes. Oh, do thou dare  
T' appear thyself exalted in my greatness :  
Envious wert thou ; now do thou wholly hide  
Thy own original baseness with my blood.  
Lift up thy soul to an unhop'd-for greatness,  
And make thyself the equal of thy throne.

*Le.* The acclamation of the citizens  
Already has abundantly raised me  
Above thyself ; but, pardoning thee, if this

Sparta concede to me, will give me yet  
Fuller ascendancy o'er thee. Meanwhile  
Let me present thee now, for needs I must,  
To Sparta.—Hast thou aught else to impart?

*Agis.* This only, that thou know'st not how to be  
Vicious, nor know'st how to dissemble virtue.

*Le.* Now that thou hast imparted all thy thoughts,  
Or ere th' asylum once more rescue thee  
From Sparta's reach, I think myself constrain'd  
To drag thee to a prison.—Guards, advance.

*Agis.* I in a prison more securely feel  
Than thou upon a throne. By Sparta, we  
Shall both be heard; nor face to face canst thou  
Before me stand.—Thou ruinest thyself  
If thou in prison kill me; this thou knowest.  
Oh think, and think again; to save thyself,  
And murder me, no means to thee remain,  
Save those which heretofore I pointed out.

#### SCENE THE THIRD.

*Leonidas.*

*Le.* At last I've caught him. Many obstacles,  
'Tis true, and mighty dangers, I confront:  
Yet will I, yes, though even at the risk  
Of my own detriment, yet will I slay  
This haughty importuning demagogue.  
But by his death I shall accomplish nothing,  
If first I do not rob him of his fame:  
This can alone perpetuate my sway.—  
Alas! I feel it e'en to agony!—  
Nor can I give it utterance; when he speaks,  
A permeating ray of genuine truth

Illumes my bosom, and almost subdues me . . .  
Ah no ! it tears and maddens my vex'd heart,  
That insupportable and stern parade  
Of hated virtue ! Let him die ; yes, perish . . .  
E'en if t' extinguish him my life I forfeit.

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Agixiade, Leonidas, Agesistrata.*

*Agi.* Father, and is it true ? . . by treacherous wiles  
Hast thou to soldiers hands my spouse . . .

*Ages.* Is this  
Thy promised faith, Leonidas ?

*Le.* What faith ?  
What have I promised ? I have pledged my faith  
To Sparta, but to Agis never.

*Agi.* Ah !  
Beloved father, to thy daughter grant . . .  
Alas ! . .

*Ages.* Spontaneously did he not quit  
The place of refuge ? Did he not come forth,  
Alone, unarm'd, and of his own accord,  
To treat with thee of peace ? And thou, meanwhile,  
Dost instigate thy parasites to drag him  
Within a prison ? violating thus  
The honour of a king, and, more than this,  
The express will of Sparta ? . . Infamous . . .

*Le.* Oh ladies, to divert me from my will,  
Tears and reproaches equally are vain.  
I am the first of Sparta's magistrates,  
And not her tyrant. The ephori and Sparta  
Should now pass judgment on the guilty Agis ;  
The ephori and Sparta should restore him,

If innocent, to his suspended rank,  
 Ne'er would it have been possible to prove him  
 Guilty or innocent, if he persisted  
 To seek th' interposition of the people,  
 Or an asylum in the temple's walls.  
 'Tis time, high time, that Sparta should be freed  
 From the distraction of suspense, produced  
 By knowing not, if she does, as she ought,  
 Possess two monarchs, or if one is wanting.

*Agi.* Ah father! . . . Agis rescues thee from death,  
 And thou that Agis draggest to a prison?  
 On him hast thou bestow'd thy daughter's hand,  
 And yet would'st rob him of his fame? Though  
 guilty,

(Which he is not,) thou shouldst be the first  
 To interpose in his behalf. I gave  
 To thee no dubious trial of my love  
 In thy adversity: and now from Agis  
 Nothing, in his adversity, can wrest me:  
 To doom thy daughter with thy son-in-law  
 To chains, or to release him from those chains,  
 Art thou constrain'd: nor menaces, nor prayers,  
 Shall e'er persuade me to abandon him.  
 Nor canst thou wreak a vengeance on his head,  
 Which shall not equally rebound on me:  
 Thou, thou must shed that very daughter's blood,  
 Who, to accompany thee in banishment,  
 Her husband, and her children, and her throne,  
 And her beloved country, sacrificed.

*Ages.* Oh thou indeed not his, but my true daughter!

Thou Spartan wife and daughter, thou in vain  
 Appealest to a father not a Spartan.—

Base envy, and still baser thirst of vengeance,  
Close both his heart and lips.—What could'st thou  
say? . . .

Thou, oh Leonidas, within thy heart  
Hast sworn th' entire destruction of my son,  
I know thou hast; and equally I know  
All, all thy impious stratagems. But yet  
If thou on both of us should'st death inflict,  
(For my existence and my son's are one,)  
In vain thou hopest to destroy our fame.  
Thine own by this means . . . but what do I say?  
Art thou possess'd of fame?—No other object  
Did thy heart e'er propose, than to preserve  
And to augment thy riches by the throne.  
Thou in Seleucus' court becam'st at once  
Accomplish'd in the art of avarice,  
And that of wasting blood. A Persian thou,  
Reignest in Sparta: hence thou dost abhor  
The equality of citizens, from whence  
New virtues soon would rise; whence thou once  
more

Would'st be for ever from the throne expell'd:  
Nor dare thy heart aspire beyond that throne.

*Le.* Nor thy reproaches can exasperate,  
Nor thy just sorrows mollify my soul.  
Sparta, and not myself, impeaches Agis,  
And summons him to exculpate himself.  
Towards him no other force will I adopt,  
(Nor could I if I would,) except to take  
From him all means by which he would evade  
Just chastisement . . .

*Ages.* Just?—Tell me, would'st thou dare  
To all-assembled Sparta, in this forum,

Here to present him, from the terror free  
Of thy arm'd satellites? . . .

*Le.* I know not yet  
The judgment of the ephori; but . . .

*Ages.* Thine  
Is too well known to me! Let Agis be  
Brought to the presence of collected Sparta,  
Not of the mercenary ephori,  
Or to *his* presence Sparta will repair.  
If thou destroy me not before my son,  
Although a powerless defenceless lady,  
This I protest to thee shall be accomplish'd.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Leonidas, Agiziade.*

*Agi.* I will not, father, from thy side depart,  
Nor at thy footsteps will I cease to kneel,  
Nor to embrace thy knees, till thou once more  
Restore to me my husband; or till thou  
With thy own hand join me with him in death.

*Le.* Beloved daughter, rise! oh never more  
Do thou depart from me, I wish nought else.  
Thou hast with me magnanimously shared  
The many outrages of adverse fortune;  
Hence is it just, that thou a partner be  
In my prosperity: no one shall be  
Over my heart more prevalent than thou:  
Thee, as my representative, I make  
The arbitress of Sparta:—nor without thee . . .

*Agi.* What words are these? 'Tis Agis I demand;  
Agis, and nought besidea. Thou gav'st him to me;  
And thou canst never take him from me, no,

If thou take not my life ; never canst thou  
From Sparta take him, without dreadful stain  
Of violence as a king, and as a man,  
Of a denaturalized and cruel heart.

*Le.* How canst thou thus be wilfully deceived ?  
That he is guilty, art thou not convinced ?  
But grant that he is guiltless, thou know'st well,  
In either case, he is not in my power.  
Th' ephori ought to hear him, ought to judge him :  
Nor, for his detriment, or his advantage,  
Can I, unaided, any thing perform.

*Agi.* Thou art a father ; and thou lovest me ;  
Thou hast already seen my filial love  
Brought to a cruel test ; and can it be  
That thou would'st now dissemble with thy daughter ?—

By treacherous arts erewhile hadst thou the power  
Unaided, to immure him in a prison ?  
And, being innocent, canst thou not save him ?  
Ah, force me not to think thee . . .

*Le.* What avails it ?  
In this I can do nothing ; furthermore,  
'Tis needful that without delay I give  
To th' ephori, not only an account  
Of my own actions, but of those of Agis.

*Agi.* Ah no ! I will not quit thee : nor canst thou  
A cruel order give, that will not fall,  
At least in part, upon thy daughter . . .

*Le.* Cease ;  
Return thou to my palace . . .

*Agi.* I go with thee.  
All wilt thou do, all oughtest thou to do,





Are all things by thy vigilance disposed ?

*An.* Dost thou not see ? Within these spacious  
confinés

Of Sparta's prison, it appear'd to me  
Our seats might fitly be arranged ; the place,  
Less ample than the forum, will contain  
Less of the dregs of Sparta : but, however,  
As many here may introduce themselves,  
As the completion of our views require,  
At every entrance centinels I've placed,  
And have in numbers mingled our adherents—  
Behold, the place already is half fill'd ;  
Nor are there scarcely any of our foes.  
As yet the tidings are not fully spread  
Of the great trial : and I hope that all  
Will be accomplish'd ere th' audacious mother  
Comes to disturb it with her headstrong train.

*Le.* But art thou sure that from such promptitude  
Danger may not result ?

*An.* No trifling force,  
Besides our dignity, the cause supports.  
There will be need of special circumspection  
In detailing the charges ; we must seem  
Just to ourselves, yet of the people's good,  
More than our own, tenacious advocates.  
Some tumult may arise ; to frustrate this  
Precautionary schemes are laid. For us  
It will suffice, that Agis from these walls  
No more depart alive. To counteract  
The first audacious movements of the people,  
Our friends among the citizens, thy soldiers,  
The influence of the ephori, and last  
Thy own audacity, may well suffice.

Time is meanwhile ensured ; and we shall have  
From time entire success . . .

*Le.* Behold the senate,  
And all the ephori : the populace  
In numbers follow them, and they appear  
Not turbulent in aspect ; nay, they seem  
Pleased at the accusation to assist  
Of a subverting monarch. Courage, courage.  
While with insinuating flatteries,  
And opportune, their fancies I allure,  
Do thou the prison enter, and forthwith,  
Agis, well guarded, to our presence bring.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Leonidas, People, Ephori, Senators : each one placed  
according to his rank.*

*Le.* Praise to the gods ! I see collected here  
The real citizens ; and not confused  
With the audacious, turbid, abject people,  
Who, with their numbers, strive to implicate  
You in their error, spite of your consent.  
A spectacle unprecedented, now  
Attracts the eyes of universal Sparta ;  
The most important that can ever be  
By a free man beheld. A king of yours  
Charged by your ephori, and before you  
Accused. His accusation you will hear,  
His pleading, and the final judgment given,  
In which yourselves, I hope, will bear a part.  
I, though a king, with joy announce it to you.  
Ah ! I had not such fate on that dire day,  
Fatal to me, to Sparta not propitious,

In which, an exile, from my throne degraded,  
Forlorn I wander'd, doubtful of my life.  
By guilty violence was I oppress'd,  
Unheard and unaccused ; yet more dismay,  
Than from my unjust banishment, my heart  
Endured from the subversion of the laws,  
And from the imminent calamities,  
Which threatened Sparta when I left her walls.  
At last yourselves convinced of your misfortunes,  
Once more reseatd me upon the throne,  
And, at the same time, Sparta's outraged laws :  
Agesilaus, and Cleombrotus,  
And the bribed ephori, their partizans,  
Inimical to Sparta, ye proscribed.  
Agis remains : there are who think him guiltless ;  
And perhaps he is so. But meanwhile I wish'd  
His person to secure, nor, doing this,  
Do I propose in his imprisonment  
A further purpose than to clear his fame.  
If he were once convicted of offence,  
Ye should first hear me for my son-in-law  
Pardon implore : his inexperienced youth  
Must, in your judgment, as it does in mine,  
Make him appear not undeserving pity.  
Ephori, senators, and citizens,  
Your sacred legislative majesty  
Never aspired to exercise a right  
Nobler than this discretionary power.  
To-day you ascertain your monarch's faults,  
And pardon them : for I indeed to-day  
Submit to your inspection all my deeds.  
It seems to me that this is no light proof  
Of my pure heart and equitable rule ;

And to afford to you that proof I pant.  
 Let Agis by Leonidas be taught  
 To tremble at the laws.—But see, already  
 Agis presents himself at your tribunal:  
 Behold I sit in silence : I await,  
 Myself a citizen, from fellow citizens  
 The termination of this lofty process.  
 With all my powers I swear to countenance  
 Whate'er it be, your free, unanimous,  
 Your sacred, and immutable decision.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Anpharus, Agis amidst Guards, Leonidas, People,  
 Ephori, Senators.*

*An.* Ephori, Spartans, king, he, whom I drag  
 Before the true tribunal of my country,  
 Is Agis of Eudamidas. Erewhile  
 He, with Leonidas, o'er Sparta reign'd ;  
 Him afterwards he banish'd from the throne,  
 And a new colleague to himself assumed,  
 Cleombrotus. It seem'd to you expedient  
 To reinstate Leonidas, who thence  
 Resumed the sceptre from Cleombrotus.  
 Then to the sacred limits of th' asylum  
 This Agis fled ; wherefore, himself will tell you,  
 While there immured, no longer was he king,  
 The throne he had abandon'd : yet not thence  
 Became he private ; he had not laid down  
 His dignity, nor was it taken from him.  
 Not guiltless, since he fled to an asylum ;  
 Not guilty, since he never was accused.  
 The gods of Sparta have delivered him

To you to-day, although by none of us  
 Th' asylum which he chose has been prophaned.  
 Hence I accuse him now before you all  
 Of changed, betray'd, and violated laws;  
 Of stratagems despotically used  
 Against Leonidas, and the ephori;  
 Of arbitrary views, as instruments  
 To whose success the bribed rebellious dregs  
 Of Spartan profligates, he strove to gain.  
 And, lastly, to concentrate in one charge  
 All his offences, I accuse him to you  
 Of having violated and betray'd  
 The delegated majesty of Sparta.

*Agis.* Truly a solemn and imposing pomp  
 Is this : but why in such an exigence  
 Is not collected Sparta here convened ?  
 Why, as th' accused are always wont to be,  
 Am I not to the forum led ?—'Tis true  
 I see the ephori, a king is here,  
 And I behold a shadow of the senate.  
 But yet, as far as I can cast my eyes,  
 I see no citizens, except a few,  
 Powerful, and mingled with arm'd satellites.  
 The majesty of universal Sparta  
 May this indeed be deem'd ? I, not alone,  
 Would have all Sparta, but all Greece collected,  
 To hear me vindicate my innocence.  
 Now since within your bosom there does dwell  
 Such plenary conviction of my guilt,  
 Say wherefore is it that you wrest from me,  
 With such a great proportion of my hearers,  
 At the same time such great part of my shame ?

*Lc.* Far as the place permits, thou seest here

A multitude of citizens assembled.—

To bring thee from the confines of the prison  
Would implicate too much, as thou know'st well,  
The ephori's stern dignity; too much,  
If thou be'st innocent, thy innocence.  
Sparta heard thee, defending thy retreat,  
Erewhile adduce, that thus thou would'st remove  
All pretext of disturbance, all pretence  
For sanguinary measures, from the people:  
Would'st thou amid that people's violence,  
And turbulent vociferation, go,  
A quiet and free judgment to obtain?

*Agis.* A quiet judgment, and for you the safest,  
Would it have been at once to have dispatch'd  
The executioner where I'm imprison'd:  
But far less quiet will this process prove  
Than you desire. Terror prompts not my words;  
No; of my destiny already sure,  
The forum and this place to me are one.  
I, without hearing it, my sentence know:  
But I indeed shall never thence receive  
A deeper injury, than that which I  
Long in my heart have fix'd to have from you.—  
Judges, spectators, whosoe'er you be,  
I now forewarn you all, that I, condemn'd,  
And slain, within these walls, shall not by death,  
As fain I would do, peace restore to you:  
Nor you, by dragging me to death, for this  
Remain in safety.—I await my doom  
Undaunted. Be the accusations heard...

*An.* I, in the name of th' ephori, address thee;  
Listen to me; Agis, didst thou not drive,  
Unheard by thee, Leonidas to exile?

*Agis.* He, to the seat of judgment duly summon'd,  
Chose rather to escape.

*Le.* Summon'd I was,  
I cannot contradict, but to confront  
A virulent tumultuary rabble.—  
Can this be judgment, this?..

*Agis.* As much as this,  
At least. To thee was flight allow'd : and thence  
Thou never wert imprison'd. Heretofore  
Means of escape solicited my choice,  
But to the prison willingly I went,  
And willingly in judgment I appear :  
Whate'er that judgment is, I fear it not.  
I wish'd it, and exult in its conclusion ;  
And in thus making myself heard exult.

*An.* Didst thou not violate thy country's laws?

*Agis.* The sacred institutes of great Lycurgus,  
In their primæval purity, I wish'd  
To re-establish : they were ne'er repeal'd,  
But for a long time had been unobserved.  
To such a just and generous design  
Leonidas opposed : first artfully,  
Then counteracted my designs by force ;  
But both were ineffectual : thus subdued  
More by his own shame than the force of others,  
He, as the lesser evil, on himself  
Exile imposed. Let him himself confess,  
If injury to me he can impute,  
Or life and safety. Sparta with one voice,  
At his departure, all his actions blamed,  
All mine applauded. Greedy creditors  
Were then abolish'd ; wealth was equalized ;  
With luxury, the vices in her train,



And torpid indolence, from Sparta fled ;  
 And lo ! primæval liberty and virtue  
 At once resumed their sway. Dare any here  
 Deny th' assertion ?—Of my short-lived reign,  
 After the flight of your Leonidas,  
 Behold the crimes.

*An.* Dar'st thou perchance deny,  
 That by the bait of such professions caught,  
 A speedy desolation overwhelm'd  
 The cheated citizens ? The fields, though promised,  
 Never divided ; wealthy men impoverish'd ;  
 The poor dissatisfied ; and both oppress'd.  
 Wilt thou deny, too, that to transgress'd laws,  
 Such as thou deemest ours, did not succeed  
 Thy cruel unparticipated sway ?—  
 A sway the more pernicious, since it made,  
 To cover its exorbitant designs,  
 A specious pretext of pretended laws.

*Agis.* Whilst I for your sakes for the camp left  
 Sparta,  
 Whilst to th' Etolians in arms I shew'd,  
 To their dismay, regenerate Spartans arm'd,  
 From one of th' ephori become a tyrant,  
 Agesilaus, in my absence, here,  
 To wicked purposes disgraced his power.  
 Am I responsible for his misdeeds ?  
 I willingly accept their punishment,  
 Provided that my country reap the fruit  
 Of my imperfect virtues ; virtues which  
 You cannot controvert, though full, towards me,  
 Of malice and uncharitable thoughts.—  
 The restoration of Lycurgus' laws  
 Has not offended you : (in this alone

I dared to innovate) but the harsh schemes  
Of Agesilaus. What then remains for you,  
But to kill me, and to pursue my plans?

*An.* Say'st thou Agesilaus suborn'd thee  
To ruin Sparta?

*Agis.* To regenerate Sparta  
I of my own accord address'd myself,  
Because I am a Spartan.

*An.* Say, dost thou  
For a true king Leonidas acknowledge?

*Agis.* Leonidas, a Spartan, I acknowledge,  
Who in Thermopylæ, for Sparta's sake,  
Fell with three hundred Spartans.

*An.* Answer'st thou  
In such a manner? Dost thou thus contemn  
The ephori's, the senate's majesty?

*Agis.* In answering thus I venerate and adore  
The majesty of Sparta.

*An.* Guilty then  
Thou dost confess thyself?

*Agis.* Deem'st thou me so,  
Thou who accusest me?—Let us conclude,  
Let us conclude this legislative juggling.  
Thou dost accuse me; I refute the charges.  
I hither came to prove to those that hate me,  
That I, a citizen and king, as far  
As is consistent with the conscious pride  
Of innocence, spontaneously submitted  
E'en to the malversation of the laws.—  
Now here, whoe'er you be, hear my last words.

*An.* What more is there to hear?

*Agis.* Much; but express'd  
In a few words.

*An.* Thou oughtest not to speak . . .

*Agis.* Thou, one of the ephori, dost thou not know

The laws, or not remember them? The accused  
Address their country, if they wish to do it.  
Then listen to me, thou, and hold thy peace.—  
And you, oh Spartans, hear.—Of many things  
You're not inform'd at all, or misinform'd :  
Agesilaus' deeds, the cries of Anpharus,  
My silence, and Leonidas's arts,  
Have all by turns deceived you. We are all  
Now come to such a pitch, that to set free  
Each one from error, it is requisite  
That Agis perish. I, with my own hand,  
Already on myself might have bestow'd  
An independent and becoming death.  
But this escape from life had render'd me  
Guilty in your esteem. I was, and am,  
Fully persuaded in my inmost heart,  
That from the sentence, be it what it may,  
Beneath whose weight I fall, no infamy  
Can ever on myself reverberate.  
Thence to permit myself hither to be  
Before my foes dragg'd living, was my choice,  
And here I stand. That death I do not fear,  
Ye yourselves will behold. I might to you,  
If so I would, yet dearly sell my life.  
The terrible cries of the indignant people  
Will quickly make this known to you : in short,  
That I esteem at a far higher rate  
My country than myself, soon will my death  
Convince you.—I exhort, nay, I conjure you,  
Sparta's redemption and your own to win

From my atoning blood. The lands, the wealth,  
That now infatuate your phantasy,  
Lodged in the hands of few, injure alike  
Those who possess and those who covet them ;  
Those lands, that wealth, since ye would not divide  
Them with your fellow-citizens, from you  
Shall be, and ere long, wrested by your foes.  
The people, deem'd so vile, since mendicant ;  
The Spartan people hating you, ye rich,  
Ye who are stronger even than the laws,  
Numerous that people is ; 'tis goaded on  
By fierce necessity. This very people  
May constitute at once their country's splendour,  
And your salvation, if ye will reflect  
That they, as well as you, are citizens  
Of Sparta, children of the great Lycurgus.  
If otherwise, they will annihilate  
Sparta, themselves, and you. Now is the time,  
Trust to my words, mature for such a change ;  
The Gods forbid that I should witness it ;  
But they decree its advent : Agis' blood  
Is indispensable to hasten it ;  
And Agis yields that blood. Pity for you,  
Not for myself, I feel. These are the words  
Of one whose only object is to die ;  
Who to the tomb carries no other wish  
Except to save his country. Far beyond  
The reach of malice is the name of Agis :  
It is not needful to make me illustrious  
That others give effect to my designs ;  
Rather it lessens my renown in part  
That others should succeed where I have fail'd.  
Be then the punishment assign'd to me

The final ebullition of your rage ;  
 And the first fruit of your exhausted malice  
 The restoration of primæval virtue ;  
 The re-establishment of the divine  
 And lofty institutions of Lycurgus,  
 And a true Spartan emulation raised  
 For freedom, arms, and patriotic love.

*People.* Great is the soul of Agis : we have been,  
 Perchance, deceived . . .

*An.* Yes, ye are deceived  
 By these seditious falsehoods.

*Agis.* Ephori,  
 What now remains for you to say I know.—  
 I of a royal citizen, at length,  
 The latest functions fully have accomplish'd.  
 I to my prison go, from whence henceforth  
 Nought but the name of Agis shall escape.

#### SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Leonidas, Anpharus, People, Ephori, Senators.*

*People.* He speaks not as a culprit : he excites  
 Involuntary wonder and compassion.

*Le.* 'Tis true, oh Spartans : by Agesilaus  
 He was seduced ; his crime appears to be  
 Worthy of pardon. I myself from you  
 Entreat it for my son-in-law ; for him  
 That rescued me from death . . .

*An.* Leonidas,  
 Before the senate and the ephori  
 Thou standest now ; and these thou should'st address.  
 Thy private arguments from public guilt  
 Wrest not the penalty ; nor pardon ever

Precedes conviction.

*Le.* I will never hear,  
 Much less myself pronounce, his punishment.  
 I will not, no, although he merit it,  
 Ever participate in Agis' death.  
 From his retreat to drag him, to convict him,  
 Before the magistrates, to this alone  
 Duty persuaded me, and this I've done :  
 No more remains, inimical towards him,  
 For me to do.—Ah ! if the people's voice,  
 And royal prayers avail to influence  
 The senate and the ephori, in them  
 We of their clemency shall soon behold  
 A noble and a memorable proof.

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Anpharus, People, Ephori, Senators.*

*An.* A foe magnanimous, the best of fathers,  
 A perfect citizen, Leonidas,  
 Has well his task accomplish'd ; it remains  
 For us to accomplish ours.—Agis stands  
 Convicted of high-treason : Ephori,  
 Say what just punishment awaits him.

*Ephori.* Death.

*People.* Ephori, all of us implore your pity ;  
 If he henceforward trouble not the state.

*An.* Heard ye those terrible and menacing shouts  
 This way approaching ? In his cause once more  
 The people rise already. While he lives  
 Can Sparta rest ? 'Tis folly to believe it.

*Ephori.* Die ! let him perish, the rebellious traitor !  
 Let Agis die ! . . .

*An.* Soon shall ye be obeyed.—  
Meanwhile, oh citizens, avoid at present  
To meet the infatuated guilty people.  
But let us with becoming boldness, we,  
The ephori, the majesty of Sparta,  
Present ourselves.—Guards, intercept the passage.  
Let us depart; and let our aspect be  
Nor timid nor elate. A mark'd indifference  
Soon makes the people recollect themselves.

## ACT THE FIFTH.

### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Inside of the Prison of Sparta.*  
*Agis.*

*Agis.* I hear tremendous howlings, and a loud  
Tumultuary uproar round my prison.—  
Ye Deities of Sparta save my country!—  
It grieves me that I did not keep a sword,  
Whence, with my hands, I might at once extinguish  
My own and Sparta's troubles at a blow.  
Those whom Leonidas will send to slay me,  
Cannot delay much longer.—Much-loved children..  
My mother, ... my beloved spouse, ... farewell ...  
No more shall I behold you! ... I bequeathe  
To you, tender remembrance of myself ...  
But for my mother's destiny I tremble:  
She's in the tyrant's power ... What do I hear?  
Who comes? The prison opens! ... Who is this?..  
My consort? ...

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Agis, Agiziade.*

*Agi.* I am with thee, much-loved Agis...  
I from the palace of my father fled,  
Where I, as in a prison, was immured.—  
The people cleared for me the path that led  
To this foul dungeon; and the very guards  
Had not the heart my entrance to forbid.—  
At length I am with thee... Oh spouse, I come,  
If it be possible, to rescue thee,  
Or with thee to expire.

*Agis.* Beloved wife!...  
My heart thou rendest... How much joy... and  
pain...

Thy presence brings me... To preserve my life,  
(For by the death of many citizens  
I, if I would, might do it) thy true love  
Alone could influence me. But thou know'st well  
I ought not to prefer thee to my country,  
Nor would'st thou that I did it. Leave me then  
To die; preserve thy own life; and defend  
Those precious pledges of our love, our children...

*Agi.* Vainly should I attempt to rescue them  
From the fierce hatred of Leonidas:  
Unnatural father! in his prosperous state  
I know him now without disguise; erewhile  
In his adversity I was deceived.  
No weapons now remain to me but tears;  
These he despises: Sparta, with her arms,  
Or nothing else, our children can preserve  
From his atrocious rage.—But thou, at least,  
Should'st prove thyself a father, and defend



Thy own life for thy offspring . . .

*Agis.* Oh my wife!

In these last moments what a terrible conflict  
Dost thou not raise within me? Thou know'st well  
I love my children; but their death is yet  
Uncertain; and 'tis certain that in streams  
The blood of Sparta's citizens would flow  
If I attempted force. And these and those  
Are both my children; but the people are  
His dearest children in a just king's sight.—  
O lady, if thou darest to survive me,  
Thou canst defend them better than myself!  
That courage, tender and sublime at once,  
Which made thee the companion of thy father;  
That courage which induced thee to become  
The faithful friend of my adversity;  
That will suffice to be a guide to thee  
To avert destruction from their innocent lives.  
Guilty and fierce as is Leonidas,  
He is thy father: if thy little ones  
Thou claspest in thy arms; if thy pure breast  
Become a refuge to their innocence,  
He cannot have the heart to murder them.  
Ah! run from hence, fly to thy tottering babes,  
As their defender watch; for them live on,  
Or only die with them; for if they perish,  
Nothing compels thee then to drag on life.

*Agis.* Alas! . . . what shall I do? . . . If I should leave  
thee . . .

My barbarous father would by force keep me  
In life; . . . and what a life! . . . Widow'd from thee . . .  
But even if he let our children live, . . .  
Their throne would then be taken from them . . . Ah!  
I will expire with thee . . .

*Agis.* Oh lady, hear me, and be pacified . . .  
Would'st thou be less heroic as a mother,  
Than as a daughter? Thou fear'dst not my wrath,  
The day that thou accompani'dst thy father :  
Thy children didst thou for his sake desert,  
And thy beloved consort : would'st thou now,  
When thou dost leave him for thy children's sake,  
Tremble at that same father? Thou with them  
May'st fly from hence : thou hast t' oppose to him  
Efficient weapons, thy own innocence :  
Lastly, thou hast a thousand means to try,  
Ere thou resolve on death. Ah ! I conjure thee,  
Beloved consort, try them ; once again  
Resume thy lofty heart ; nor weaken mine  
With female lamentations. Wouldest thou  
That I expired in tears? Ah, no !—If thou  
Art worthy *Agis*, do not thou force me  
To make that *Agis* of himself unworthy.

*Agis.* Say, was paternal fondness ever deem'd  
Unworthy of a father, to prefer  
His children to himself? . . .

*Agis.* Before our children  
Our country must be loved. For a long time  
My blood have I deem'd consecrate to her ;  
Thine, if it needful be, should'st thou devote  
To our beloved children : but thou givest,  
If thou for their sakes dost consent to live,  
To them, and to myself, a higher proof  
Of thy regard. Thy tears may yet do much ;  
More than thou dost imagine : in the people  
Will they, if in *Leonidas* they do not,  
Excite compassion ; and to them to save,  
E'en without loss of blood, my little ones,

Will be most easy. Finally, reflect,  
That Agis wholly dies not while thou livest.  
I, in a vulgar woman, should admire,  
As proof at once of passionate regard  
And sublime heroism, the fixed will  
Not to survive her husband ; but I hope,  
Nay I demand from thee, and thou the wife  
Of Agis, by that union with myself,  
Art pledged, intrepidly, to more than death,—  
A life of sorrow for thy children's sake . . .  
Weeping I ask it of thee ; may these tears  
Sink in thy heart . . . Ah ! for thyself alone,  
And for our children, hast thou seen at length  
Thy Agis weep.

*Agis.* Irrevocably then  
Hast thou decreed to die ? . . .

*Agis.* Thou canst not doubt  
My innocence.—Receive my last embrace ;  
And take it, in my name, to our dear children.  
Tell them, that for my country's sake I die ;  
Tell them that if, as adults, to my throne  
They e'er should come, they, for their father's death,  
No other vengeance ever must inflict,  
Than, imitating him, to renovate  
The sublime institutes of great Lycurgus :  
And, if in this, as I have done, should they  
Encounter adverse fates, bid them, like me,  
In this immortalizing enterprize,  
As men of valour sacrifice their lives.

*Agis.* I cannot speak . . . Must I abandon thee ? . .

*Agis.* A faithful counsellor, in my worthy mother,  
Wilt thou possess, if still her life be spared !—  
Now go ; ah leave me ; go.—A wife, a queen,

A mother, Spartan, and a citizen  
Art thou; these lofty characters support.

*Agi.* Oh heaven! . . . Eternally . . .

*Agis.* Cease, cease, I pray thee.

*Agi.* My tottering feet scarcely support my frame.

*Agis.* Ah come! when once thou hast departed  
hence,

Thou soon wilt find protection and support.

*Agi.* Oh misery! . . . The iron gate unfolds . . .

*Agis.* Guards, I consign to you your monarch's  
daughter.

*Agi.* *Agis.* . . Ah cruel! . . I will never quit him . .

*Agis!* . . . farewell . . . farewell . . .

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Agis.*

*Agis.* Ah wretched me! . . .

How many deaths must I in one endure? . . .

That grief which husbands and which fathers feel,

What grief can ever equal?—Sparta, Sparta,

How much thou cooest me! . . . Leonidas

Is yet a father: in my heart I feel

A grateful presage that he will consign

My children to his daughter.—Cease my tears.—

My death is now approaching. As a Spartan,

And as an innocent king, I ought to die . . .

Oh death, how tardy are thy steps!—But yet,

Behold, again I hear my prison gate

Grate on its hinges? . . . And I also hear

The shouts redoubled round these walls! . . . What

now

Can this portend? . . . Whom do I see? . . .

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Agesistrata, Agis.**Agis.* . . . Oh heavens! . . .

Oh mother! . . .

*Ages.* Son, in this thy hour of need,  
To thee thy mother never could be wanting.  
A liberty, that's worthy of ourselves,  
I bring thee.—In a far different shape  
To thee I would have yielded it; but when  
There was a time for this, thou didst thyself  
Divest me of all means t' accomplish it.*Agis.* What would'st thou with these Spartan cries  
obtain? . . .*Ages.* In vain doth Sparta cry. The treacherous  
tyrant

The place hath so well guarded with his soldiers,  
That our adherents nothing can perform:  
In vain do they attempt to force their ranks;  
Inert, abash'd, disgraced, discomfited,  
They are repell'd. Among our impious foes  
Forward I darted; from behind I heard  
Fierce voices in my favour, which exclaim'd,  
"Miscreants! dare you to interdict approach  
"To Agis' mother?" . . . Anpharus then saw me;  
Made them give way to me, and here I'm driven.

*Agis.* Perfidious! He would also make thee cap-  
tive.

Ah, mother! To what useless risk for me! . . .

*Ages.* Risk! dost thou say? Beside my son, I come  
To certain death. Behold, in proof of this,  
The gift I bring.

*Agis.* A sword!—Oh genuine mother!—  
My breast did not contain another wish  
Than to possess a sword to rescue Sparta,  
And to withdraw myself from death-wounds, given  
By an ignoble hand: and thou, oh joy!  
Bringest one to me!—Give it me...

*Ages.* Chuse thou:  
There are two swords; mine is the one thou leavest.

*Agis.* Oh heaven!... and wilt thou?...

*Ages.* Dost thou then account me  
Mother of *Agis*, or a vulgar woman?  
Few years at best remain for me to live:  
Sparta, which thou in vain dost hope to save,  
Already is enthrall'd: if she remain,  
Thy mother is *Leonidas's* slave.  
Now speak; I hear thee: darest thou counsel me  
On such conditions to consent to live?

*Agis.* What can I say? I am a son—Oh mother,  
Suffer me first to die: although enslaved,  
Sparta is not extinct; hence other hands  
May liberate her yet. Perchance my blood  
To freedom may restore her: but if I,  
Abject, in order not to shed my own,  
Had let the citizens in my defence  
Lavish *their* blood, Sparta had been no more.

*Ages.* Sparta too certainly expires with thee.—  
And wouldest thou that I, a Spartan mother,  
Survive my son and country?—Son, embrace me.

*Agis.* Oh mother!... Thou surpassest even me  
In dignity of soul.—Now give to me,  
And take the last embrace. I dare not weep  
In thus embracing thee; for in thine eyes  
I see thy tears by fortitude restrain'd.

*Ages.* My Agis, . . thou indeed art worthy Sparta . .  
And I of thee am worthy.—Once again  
Let me embrace thee . . . Whence this deafening  
noise?

SCÈNE THE FIFTH.

*Leonidas, Ampharus, Soldiers with drawn swords.*  
*Agis, Agesistrata.*

*Le.* At length we are victorious.

*Ages.* What's your purpose?

*Agis.* Ah! do not leave my side.

*An.* Soldiers, your swords

At Agis first, then at his mother, aim.<sup>1</sup>

*Agis.* Like me, conceal thy weapon for awhile;  
Let us await their coming, and be silent.<sup>2</sup>

*An.* Who now restrains you? Why delay ye thus?  
Tear them asunder instantly by force.

*Agis.* Which of you, which, would dare lay hands  
on us?—

Royal Leonidas, dost thou behold?  
Even thy own bribed soldiers, stupified,  
Immoveable, in Agis' presence stand.—  
But I will soon deliver thee from fear.  
One thing alone do I demand of thee.

*Le.* It is . . .

*Agis.* That thou attentively would'st watch  
Thy daughter, that she imitate me not.

<sup>1</sup> The soldiers approach Agis.

<sup>2</sup> The soldiers, seeing Agis immoveably expect them, all of  
them pause at once.

*Le.* Is then her love for thee so strong?

*Agis.* More strong

Than thy abhorrence.—But she loves thee too,  
And hath given proof of it; and, finally,  
Thou art her father: my last words are these:<sup>1</sup>—  
I die—May Sparta . . . only . . . profit by it . . .

*An.* He has a sword!

*Ages.* Two swords I brought.<sup>2</sup>—Oh son!  
I follow thee; and fall . . . upon thee . . . dead.

*Le.* I am struck dumb with terror and with wonder . . .

Ah, what will Sparta say? . . .

*An.* Their lifeless bodies

Should from the people be conceal'd . . .

*Le.* Ah, never!

From our own eyes we never can conceal them.

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<sup>1</sup> He brandishes his sword aloft, and kills himself.

<sup>2</sup> She also discovers her sword, and kills herself.



# SOPHONISBA.

## A TRAGEDY.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SOPHONISBA.

SCIPIO.

SYPHAX.

*Roman Soldiers:*

MASINISSA.

*Numidian Soldiers.*

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SCENE,—The Camp of Scipio in Africa.

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### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Syphax, with Roman Centurions.*

*Sy.* You may at least here leave me to myself  
Till Scipio's return.—My hands, my feet,  
Are manacled with fetters; Syphax now  
Stands in the centre of the Roman camp;  
Of every means of flight is he bereft:  
Grant him, at least, a respite from your presence.

#### SCENE THE SECOND.

*Syphax.*

*Sy.* How hard to bear is military pride!  
Should their commander as in real valour,  
In haughtiness surpass them . . . 'Tis not so;  
Scipio is known to me: within my palace,

At Cirta, he was formerly my guest :  
Most gentle and humane he then appear'd . . .  
Credulous Syphax, dost thou speak in earnest ?  
Then Scipio came to thee to ask for aid ;  
Nor was he then thy conqueror.—Vanquish'd king !  
Taken in fight, and bound in fetters, dragg'd  
Within the enemy's camp, dost thou yet live ? ..  
Oh Sophonisba ! to what obloquy  
Hast thou reduced me ? Now, when I no more  
Ought, or design to live, I am so fall'n,  
That e'en the power of voluntary death  
No more is mine ? .. But hark, the trumpet's sound  
Scipio's approach announces. See. He comes.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Scipio, Syphax.*

*Sci.* Let all my train retire. A retinue  
Would be an insult to a captive king.—  
Syphax, provided that the lofty pangs  
Of vanquish'd kings admitted of relief,  
Thou should'st now hear me speak to thee in terms  
Of pity ; but the greatness of thy heart  
Is known to me, to which each pitying word  
Would be an added wound : hence, at this time,  
Nothing will I attempt, except to wrest,  
With my own hands, thy unbecoming fetters,  
This thy right-hand I ought indeed t' unloose ;  
A pledge of friendship and of fealty,  
I well remember that thou gavest it  
To me in Cirta.—But what do I see ?  
My kindness thou disdainest ? Motionless,  
And fierce, thou fixest on the ground thine eyes ?

Ah! if in battle Scipio had subdued thee,  
 He with no other fetters than thy own,  
 Than by reminding thee of thy sworn faith,  
 Thy person had enthrall'd. Then yield, I pray,  
 These iron manacles of thee unworthy;  
 Yield them to me: raise thy disconsolate brow:  
 And fix thine eyes, erect, on Scipio's face.

*Sy.* On Scipio's face? Oft have I seen it near,  
 With soul undaunted, in the ranks of war:  
 Fortune, the arbitress of all things, now  
 Wills that I should dare not to see it more.  
 Nought should the Romans to this camp have borne  
 But the cold relics of what once was Syphax:  
 But to the valiant, death, though coveted,  
 Sometimes is not allowed; and I am here,  
 Alas! a lamentable proof of this;  
 Ah, wretched that I am!—Hence are these chains  
 Become my portion; hence my downcast looks  
 Are to the dust condemn'd; for never more  
 Can I presume to raise them to the eyes  
 Of a triumphant foe.

*Sci.* Of the subdued  
 Scipio is not the foe; and though till now  
 Fortune hath look'd on him with smiles alone,  
 He's not elated from a prosperous fate,  
 As from an adverse he would ne'er be abject.—  
 I am resolved to overcome thy pride  
 By courteous violence. Behold unloosed  
 Thy unbecoming chains: as man to man,  
 Equal with equal, now to Scipio speak.

*Sy.* Thou speakest courteously, and thou art courteous.

If to a king it were supportable

To be o'ercome, 'twould be so by thy arms.  
But what can I now utter, that may seem  
To thee becoming my past dignity,  
And worthy of my present wretchedness?  
And what remains for thee to say to me  
That I already know not?

*Sci.* I? To thee

I will confess, that yet so great I deem thee,  
And so magnanimous, that I doubt not  
To ask of thee the reason of thy change.

*Sy.* It is not usual to make bare the heart  
Except to faithful and experienced friends;  
And kings are seldom, or are never bless'd  
With friends like these. Perhaps I, although a king,  
Was once not undeserving real friends:  
And, as a proof of this, I now to thee,  
Without disguise, will manifest my heart.  
In thee, a generous foe, 'twere more discreet  
Than in a feign'd friend, thus to place reliance.  
Then listen to me.—Thou wert born a Roman,  
And I an African: the citizen  
Of an illustrious commonwealth art thou;  
I of a numerous and powerful people  
Was once the monarch. Interposing seas  
Sever'd from mine thy country: I ne'er placed  
In your Italia my encroaching feet;  
Thou standest sword in hand in Africa:  
The vanquisher of Carthage, 'tis your hope  
To bring all Africa beneath your sway.  
Carthage to me contiguous, was hence  
Alternately my foe and my ally:  
And though she also, equally with Rome,  
Execrates kings, her people, less than yours,

From power and arrogance intolerant,  
 Was thence by me less bitterly abhorr'd.  
 By every commonwealth a monarch's heart  
 Is tacitly aggrieved ; what anger then  
 Must that excite in him which dares to shew  
 Towards him a haughty front ?—Behold the whole  
 Divulged to thee : my heart was resolute  
 To hate you e'en to death, as insolent  
 And predatory foreigners : to swear  
 To you allegiance and fidelity,  
 After your memorable deeds in Spain,  
 Became my interest.

*Sci.* But thou by proof  
 Hadst known the valour of the Roman arms ;  
 Why didst thou violate thy faith with Rome ?  
*Sy.* And what will Scipio say, if I divulge  
 To him the naked truth ?—That mighty Scipio,  
 Whose heart, th' abode of friendship and of pity,  
 And of all elevated impulses,  
 Hath hitherto proved inaccessible  
 To love alone.—The blandishments of beauty,  
 That irresistible captivity  
 Which love inflicts, hath wrought in me this change ;  
 To thee do I confess it ; and feel not,  
 In saying it to thee, the blush of shame  
 Suffuse my face. A citizen thyself,  
 The love of fame impels thee to surpass  
 Thy fellow citizens ; hence art thou deaf  
 To other impulses : a king who sees,  
 Seated upon his throne, no rival near,  
 Such an incentive needs ; hence, deaf to fame,  
 His other flatter'd passions render him.  
 Believe thou this from an unhappy king :

For he may be sincere. Great as thou art,  
 Feel pity from it rather than contempt,  
 For I disdain it not from Scipio only.

*Sci.* I never felt the flames of love, but I  
 Respect, and even fear, his boundless power.  
 Oft have I fled from him ; for it is best  
 T' anticipate his arrows, to whose wounds  
 All after remedies prove impotent.  
 Thou, ere thou saw'st her, should'st have felt mis-  
 trust

Towards Sophonisba : finally, she was  
 The child of Asdrubal, in Carthage born,  
 Imbued with rancour and with hate towards Rome  
 E'en with her very milk : if thou wert then  
 By thy necessities united to us,  
 Clearly might'st thou foresee, that detriment  
 Must to thyself assuredly result  
 In forfeiting our friendship.

*Sy.* Dost thou then  
 As nothing deem, that which so often sways,  
 So often fascinates unwary man ?  
 Hope ? I imagined, that, to Asdrubal  
 United by such ties, in Carthage none  
 Would equal me in power : then having seen  
 The charms of Sophonisba, caught, subdued,  
 In short more fetter'd than e'en now I am  
 In this thy camp, with inadvertent steps,  
 I from one error to another stumbled.  
 For Sophonisba's sake I forfeit now  
 My kingdom, my renown, and, what is worse,  
 My self-esteem : and yet, would'st thou believe it ?  
 Fain would I languish out a few hours more  
 In hated life, that I at length may hear

Of her security. On her account  
Do no foreboding thoughts of infamy  
Oppress my heart : her soul, like mine, is lofty ;  
Nor could she ever, more than Syphax could,  
Living, be dragg'd behind thy car a captive.  
Now hear, not thoughts that do become a king,  
But the wild ravings of a frantic lover.  
A jealous fury tortures me, and makes  
My vacillating life protracted death.  
Perhaps in Cirta, in my very palace,  
Is Sophonisba, by your arms subdued,  
Become already the illustrious prey  
Of Masinissa, of my mortal foe.  
To him a promised spouse ere to myself ;  
Perhaps now he burns for her . . . at such a thought,  
With desperate inexplicable rage  
I feel myself o'erwhelm'd. I wish to die,  
I ought to die ; and powerless as I am,  
A thousand means of death do I possess.  
But ah ! I know not how, nor can I die,  
Till I have learn'd her destiny. The prey  
Of Masinissa, ah ! (if prayers of mine  
With thee weigh aught) ah ! never, never grant  
That she his prey become . . . Oh Heaven ! . . . I burn  
With rage. . . But whither does that rage impel me  
Beyond my royal dignity ?—No more  
Remains for me to say . . . permit that now  
I to my tent withdraw : I would conceal  
My unbecoming grief. Excepting Scipio,  
No man should see me in the Roman camp  
With face more ruffled than becomes a king.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Scipio.*

*Sci.* Unhappy king! His words excite in me  
Equal compassion and surprise.—But grieved  
Am I at heart at that which he has told me.  
By Masinissa, in beleaguer'd Cirta,  
Will Sophonisba doubtlessly be seen:  
And should he fall into the snares of love?  
And should he waver in his faith to Rome?..  
Oh valiant warrior, by myself beloved,  
No less than indispensable to Rome,  
For thee I tremble.—What unwelcome cares  
Remain for thee, oh Scipio! How much grief  
Does it cost generous hearts to practise force  
Even on vanquish'd foes! Should I be then  
Constrain'd to practise it against a friend?..  
Ah, this indeed, this is the only duty  
Of a commander, that my soul abhors.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE THE FIRST.

*Sophonisba, Masinissa, Numidian Soldiers.*

*Ma.* Lady, pause here: behold the leader's tent.  
Scarcely will Scipio have been heard, or seen,  
By thee, than all suspicion from thy heart  
Will be dispell'd.

*So.* Oh Masinissa, yet  
Art thou not satisfied? I give to thee,  
I, daughter as I am of Asdrubal,



A lofty and a terrible of love  
In coming with thee to the Roman camp.  
But, that I should sustain th' abhorred sight  
O' th' Roman leader? . . 'tis too much . . .

*Ma.* This camp  
In which we stand, thou may'st as much pronounce  
Numidian as Roman. A strong band  
Of my troops here are placed, and I am here  
No unimportant pillar of the war.  
Daughter of Asdrubal art thou no more;  
Widow no more of Syphax, since thou art  
The promised spouse of Masinissa.

*So.* Ah!  
Let not the friendship which binds thee to Scipio  
Blind thee too much. He, whatso'er he be,  
Is evermore a Roman; hence he deems  
All things subservient to Rome; nor can he  
To any enemy of Rome be friendly.  
His rage towards me will not be pacified  
With having overcome, disgraced, and slain  
Syphax; oh no! Cirta, besieged and burn'd,  
The Massasyllii to the heavy yoke  
Subjected all, have not appeased in him  
Th' ambitious cruel thirst. Now, at the sight  
Of Sophonisba almost in his hands,  
Rightfully deem'd by him, for so I am,  
Implacably the enemy of Rome,  
Now, think'at thou not, that in his haughty heart  
He cherishes th' insulting hope, to drag  
Me through the streets of Rome bound to his car?  
Yet this I apprehend not; though a woman . . .

*Ma.* Oh Heaven! what thoughts are these? While  
there remains

Within these veins of mine a drop of blood,  
Can that e'er be? Ah no! believe it not;  
Thy hate deceives thee now; thou know'st not  
Scipio.

So. Hatred and love deceive me now alike.  
Here ne'er should I have come: but in the world  
There doth remain for me no place of safety.  
It pleased my heart hither to follow thee,  
And to my heart exclusively I trusted.  
But my renown, my judgment, and my duty,  
Appointed me, among its mouldering ruins,  
A sepulchre in Cirta.

*Ma.* Dost thou grieve  
That thou hast followed me? Alas! my life  
Is irksome then to thee...

So. To die not thine  
Would now alone afflict me: and to this  
Dost thou expose me. Thou art well aware,  
Oh Masinissa, that e'en 'mid the flames  
Of Cirta's royal palace, 'mid the death  
Of my defeated people, from thy lips  
Impassion'd sentiments I dared to hear.  
Alas!... Already for a long time, I,  
By the renown of thy transcendent virtues,  
Which fill'd all Africa, had been enthrall'd.  
I, from my tenderest infancy, to thee  
Destined by Asdrubal, at once grow up  
Thy mistress and thy spouse. Then, like myself,  
Wert thou the bitter enemy of Rome:  
To Carthage and my father, afterwards,  
It seemed good to marry me to Syphax,  
And to thyself it also seemed good  
To be the friend of Rome: thus destiny

Disjoin'd us utterly . . .

*Ma.* Ah ! we are now,

I swear to thee, for ever reunited.

Thou with me reignest, or I die with thee.

Having both personally seen and proved

The sovereign virtues of the mighty Scipio,

And having never seen thy peerless beauty,

Were then the reasons that I fought for Rome.

Syphax had ever been my enemy ;

He had despoil'd me of my throne : reduced

By adverse fortune to extremity,

I found, excepting Scipio, no friend

In all the world ; th' indissoluble tie

Of sacred gratitude bound me to him.

Since have I, combating in her defence,

Amply deserved the benefits of Rome :

But Scipio's benefits, his lofty, pure,

Disinterested friendship, can alone

By friendship, and by homage to his virtues,

Be recompensed by me. Thee, thee alone

Than Scipio more I love ; thee only now

Prefer to him ; for far more than myself

Do I love thee.

*So.* To give me then a proof,

Worthy of both of us, of this thy love,

Swear to me thou, that thou wilt never let me

Living be dragg'd from Africa.

*Ma.* 'Tis useless,

Yet, since thou wilt 'st it, by this sword I swear it.

Should I have brought thee here, if I had thought

That here thou wert in danger ? In my realm

I might securely have transported thee

With my Numidians : but the call of war

Summon'd me here ; I never from thy side  
Can be dissever'd. Africa and Rome  
Shall learn to pay thee homage as my consort :  
Hence I, an enemy to all disguise,  
Will now proclaim thee such.

So. At length secure  
In my proposal, and thy solemn oath,  
I tranquillize myself . . . But hitherward  
A multitude advances : to thy tents  
Meanwhile, 'mid thy Numidians, I retire.

Ma. Since it seems good to thee, so do. This way  
Scipio advances ; I will speak to him.  
Ere long I will rejoin thee.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Scipio, Masinissa.*

Ma. Scipio,  
I never more exultingly embrace thee,  
Than when a conqueror I return : I seem  
More worthy of thee then.

Sci. Oh Masinissa,  
Thou'rt now become one of our main supports ;  
Th' artificer of glory to myself  
At the same time art thou : hence witness, Heaven,  
How much I love thee ; and that love thou knowest.—  
But tell me, (to the Roman general speak not,  
But to thy Scipio,) tell me, dost thou now  
Return indeed a conqueror ?

Ma. By my hand  
Cirta besieged, and by my hand destroy'd ;  
And all the residue dispersed and slain  
Of the dead king . . .

*Sci.* How speakest thou? E'en yet  
Hast thou to learn that Syphax lives!...

*Ma.* Oh Heaven!  
What do I hear?

*Sci.* 'Tis true, that dead in fight  
Rumour reported him. He in that fight  
Fell wounded, but not mortal was the wound,  
And thence by Lelius taken in my camp  
A captive...

*Ma.* Syphax lives? And in this camp?

*Sci.* He is the noblest fruit of our success.  
But what do I behold? Does this afflict thee?

*Ma.* Oh!... what... do I... not... feel!...  
From my surprise...

But... wherefore... with such... cold formality...  
Dost thou receive me? ... What dost thou conceal  
Within thy breast?

*Sci.* Ah Masinissa, thou,  
Yes thou indeed within thy breast dost hide,  
And to thy faithful friend, a mighty secret.  
Grief and distraction, rather than surprise,  
Are on thy face alternately express'd.  
Now whence could this arise in thee, if thus  
Syphax restored were not an obstacle  
To some conceal'd propensities of thine?  
Ah Masinissa!—All I know; to me  
Thy silence doth reveal it; for thyself,  
Excepting this, nought in the world I fear'd.  
By her alone whom now into this camp  
Thou hast enticed, by her, and no one else,  
Thy glory, and the glory of thy friend,  
At once may be obscured. I did not stand  
In Cirta at thy side: to flames of love

Hence hast thou sacrificed a distant friend.  
But yet, I do not of thy deeds complain ;  
Thou givest me an ample proof of friendship,  
In not depositing thy prize elsewhere  
Than in my camp ; in wishing to confide  
The conflicts of thy lacerated heart  
To Scipio's heart alone.

*Ma.* — That Syphax lives  
I hear most unexpectedly.—I hoped  
In Sophonisba to have found a consort :  
To me was she betroth'd ere given to Syphax :  
He ineffectually defended her  
Against our arms ; and to a conquer'd king,  
Taken in battle, there is nothing left.  
But Syphax, though subdued, in heart is lofty ;  
Nor long will he, I feel assured, survive  
This his disgrace.—But, be it as it may  
With him, listen, oh Scipio, to my thoughts.—  
A warm and sincere friend thou long hast found  
In Masinissa : equally sincere,  
And more warm as a lover, learn that he  
Derides all obstacles. A lukewarm flame  
Never yet enter'd a Numidian heart :  
Or I will be loved Sophonisba's spouse,  
Or with her breathe my last. Within thy camp  
I was myself impatient to conduct her :  
Here only were the wishes of my heart  
Thoroughly satisfied ; here, with lofty voice,  
Did glory, honour, friendship, virtue call me ;  
Here, without forfeiting my love, I hope  
Completely to discharge my several duties.  
From my commander, and my faithful friend,  
I wish to learn how we may best succeed

To vanquish Carthage ; by what arts of war  
Rome's power and splendour may be best increased,  
And glory for ourselves ; and, finally,  
How I may best ensure my happiness.

*Sci.* Wert thou my only son, I swear to thee,  
I should not mourn, as now I mourn, the blind  
And youthful error that hath thus misled thee.  
Our glory, the prosperity of Rome,  
The imminent and total fall of Carthage,  
And thy unrival'd, genuine happiness,  
All, all were in our power ; before that thou  
Vanquish'd in Cirta, to th' assaults of love  
Submittedst to captivity : but thou  
Hast taken all from us, and from thyself,  
With this thy fatal love.—But no ; thou canst not  
Stifle the cries of thy upbraiding heart ;  
Towards Syphax never canst thou be unjust ;  
Nor canst thou ever to thy only friend  
Be cruel and ungrateful. This thy love  
Is by the life of Syphax now condemn'd,  
Dissever'd, and annull'd : nor ever thou . . .

*Ma.* Nor ever ? . . . Sophonisba shall this day  
My consort be ; I swear that she shall be.  
And if, with living, Syphax would protract  
My anguish and his infamy, he ought,  
Upon this spot, himself, with his own hand,  
With his own sword, to slay me ; or himself  
To-day, by my hand immolated, fall.

*Sci.* Syphax defenceless, and a prisoner,  
Is in our camp ; and in his heart conceives not  
'Gainst Masinissa an unworthy thought.—  
Thou ravest now ; but I am well assured,  
If once thine eyes beheld that wretched king,

Thou generous, far from treating him with scorn,  
Ah yes ! would'st be the first to pity him.  
But let us grant, that, be it how it may,  
By some means or by other, Syphax die,  
And hence thou be the tranquil possessor  
Of Sophonisba, to what party then,  
Think'st thou, would'st thou betake thyself?

*Ma.* To Rome,  
And to my Scipio bound eternally,  
No power on earth . . .

*Sci.* But tell me, more than Rome  
Lov'st thou not Sophonisba?

*Ma.* I? . . . At present  
That would I not examine.

*Sci.* Wretched friend !  
I, ere thyself, already know thou dost.  
I know, that having sacrificed thy interest,  
Thy judgment, and the sacred austere names  
Of gratitude, of friendship, and of faith,  
As victim to a luckless destiny,  
Thou rushest on destruction. Thou canst not  
Asdrubal's daughter at thy side long keep,  
And persevere the advocate of Rome,  
And make thyself th' abolisher of Carthage.  
Thy fate I fervently regret. For kings,  
The enemies of Rome, thou knowest well,  
Or soon or late, what ruin is reserved.  
I speak not thus with menacing intent,  
Oh no ! suspect it not : may Heaven avert  
That I should ever be the instrument  
Of the just rage of Rome against thyself.  
This sword of mine, which formerly avail'd  
To reinstate thee in thy throne, ah no !



Shall never with thy not inferior sword,  
Which hath augmented so illustriously  
Rome's lofty victories, for mastery strive.  
No, rather than 'gainst thee, would I direct  
Its point against myself: but tell me thou,  
Am I collected Rome? I am, thou know'st,  
A private citizen of Rome; nor arms,  
Nor counsellors, nor captains, doth she want.  
Another leader in my place will come,  
With equal fortune, with superior judgment,  
And less compassion, to these fated shores;  
And he will make thee recollect thy faith,  
Though pledged so solemnly, so weakly kept.

*Ma.* Now, would'st thou that a man who is thy  
friend,

Should, to the terror of precarious ills  
In future times, yield that which he denies  
To yield to friendship? Ill thou knowest me.—  
In short, I ask of thee, whether of Cirta,  
Spoil'd by my sword and my Numidians,  
And by my blood and theirs; whether to-day  
The booty of that Cirta doth belong  
To Rome or to myself? if Sophonisba,  
My promised consort, by myself alone  
Conducted hither, in this camp is deem'd  
The wife of Masinissa and a queen,  
Or if she be the slave of Rome?

*Sci.* —She was,  
And is, (alas, but too unquestionably!)  
The wife of Syphax still.

*Ma.* I understand thee.

Oh agony! .. and dost thou hope? ..

*Sci.* To thee,

Oh Masinissa, I resign the choice :  
 From post to post defenceless in this camp  
 I wander ; thou by thy Numidians here  
 At once may'st cut me off ; thou may'st thyself  
 Plunge in my heart thy sword : but to thy ruin  
 I will not suffer thee to rush, if first  
 Thou kill me not. But if thou have the heart  
 To wish my ruin, of my own accord,  
 I, for thy sake, embrace it. Keep thy prize :  
 Rome, and her conscript fathers, then shall hear me  
 Th' accuser of myself : I must confess,  
 That to our private friendship I was pleased  
 To sacrifice the interests of Rome,  
 And of thyself ; and I must, as the fruit  
 Of my equivocal regard for thee,  
 Reap unequivocal disgrace.

*Ma.* Oh Scipio,  
 Thy too great friendship is a thousand times  
 More cruel to myself than menaces,  
 Or arms, could ever be . . . Wretch that I am ! . . .  
 My heart thou rendest.—But no power can thence  
 Extract the firm inextricable dart  
 That love hath planted there. Thy words infuse  
 Corroding poisons to the cureless wound :  
 This is indeed unheard-of agony . . .  
 Make me at once outrageously ungrateful,  
 And treat me as a foe inveterate ;  
 Or as a pitying friend bear with my woes . . .  
 Thou see'st my tears ; those tears canst thou re-  
 strain ?—

What do I say ? Ah vile ! What dare I say  
 In Scipio's presence ?—Thou hast hitherto  
 Beheld me frenetick.—Let this suffice.—

Shortly shall Scipio, the Roman leader,  
Learn what has been th' immutable resolve  
Of Masinissa, the Numidian king.

*Sci.* Ah hear me !

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Scipio.*

*Sci.* Hence he flies ! I will pursue him :  
In this distracted state I will not leave him ;  
Spite of himself he should be saved ; his heart  
Is noble ; my solicitude he merits.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE THE FIRST.

*Sophonisba.*

*So.* Ah wretched me ! What can have happen'd  
now ?

What fatal, what ferocious mystery  
Doth Masinissa harbour in his breast ?  
What hath vindictive Scipio said to him ?  
Ah evermore, I evermore foresaw  
That fatal to us both this camp would be.—  
Oh Masinissa ! . . On my countenance  
Thine eyes were fix'd, swimming with undropt tears,  
And yet thou dar'st not speak to me . . . With words  
Broken and faltering now thou call'st me thine ;  
Now stern and desperate thine arid eyes,  
With a ferocious recklessness, from me  
Thou turn'st away ; upon the naked earth  
Panting thou castest thy convulsed limbs ;

And with terrific howlings didst invoke  
 Th' infernal furies . . . Ah, thou hast transfused  
 Already thy own furies in my breast.—  
 Be they whate'er they may, this heart possess  
 A presage of the menaces of Scipio.  
 All I foresee ; yet nothing do I fear.  
 Now that he is my open enemy,  
 As he should be, now will I Scipio hear,  
 And make him hear the thoughts of Sophonisba . . .  
 But who is this coming towards me ? . . . Is this  
 Reality ? . . . Oh Heaven ! . . . Syphax alive ? . . .  
 And in this camp ? . . . Oh unexpected sight !

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Syphax, Sophonisba.*

*Sy.* A deep amazement on thy face is painted,  
 Oh lady, in beholding me again ?—  
 I should have been no more : in this respect  
 Fame was propitious, but my fortune adverse. \*

*So.* Oh unexpected and appalling sight !  
 Now is the horrid mystery at once  
 Fully unravell'd . . .

*Sy.* To thyself thou mutterest ?  
 Speak, speak to me. Behold me ; I am he,  
 Thy consort am indeed, who, for thy sake,  
 My sceptre and my honour having lost,  
 Deprived of both, in Roman fetters bound,  
 Yet on the brink of the much wish'd-for tomb  
 Awhile delay my steps to learn thy fate.

*So.* What words are these ? . . . where shall I hide  
 myself ? . . .

*Sy.* Ah ! do I see on thy bewilder'd face

At once the characters of shame and death ?  
Thy desolate impenetrable silence  
Speaks a clear language : in thy heart I read  
The conflict of a thousand impulses.  
Yet no reproaches shalt thou hear from me ;  
Although insulted, and in fetters bound,  
By all deserted, yet for thee, oh lady,  
Far more than for myself I feel compassion.  
Thou knowest if I love thee.—I'm aware  
That Andrubal's commands, the bitter hate  
That thou for Rome hast in thy breast, alone  
Were thy conductors to my bed ; for me  
Thou never feltest love. Thus I myself,  
Thou seest, plead in thy defence. I know  
That with another not unworthy flame  
Thy bosom glow'd, or ere thou wert my spouse.  
Love, by experiment, I comprehend.  
Its force omnipotent, its madnesses,  
I know them all ; and hence, spite of myself,  
Have ever loved thee. Thou, by laws divine  
And human, forced to love me, not for this  
Was it e'er possible for thee to do it.  
Hence jealous rage, by little and by little,  
Feeds on my heart : I thirsted for revenge ;  
And on my hated rival still could wreak it  
Although a captive . . . But thou conquerest, lady :  
More than a jealous, I, a sincere lover,  
Would now leave thee in safety by my death.—  
Pardon thee, groaning ; in a horrible life,  
Persist, though hating it, and this alone  
To behold thee once more ; strongly at once  
Desire thy death, and happiness with others ;  
Now as the luckless source of all my ills

Would curse thee ; weeping, would adore thee now  
 As the sole blessing left to me in life . . .  
 Behold, in what distracting agonies  
 The latest moments I drag on for thee  
 Of my protracted and opprobrious life.

So. . . . I will presume, although with trembling  
 voice,

To unveil to thee my thoughts.—Little remains  
 For me to say : magnanimously thou  
 My cause already hast too warmly pleaded :  
 Daughter of Asdrubal, and wife of Syphax,  
 It now remains alone for me to die  
 As worthy of these names.—At the report  
 Spread of thy death, 'tis true that I presumed  
 My hand to promise ; but 'tis not yet given ;  
 Thou livest, and to Syphax I belong.  
 T' avenge thy cause and mine at once 'gainst Rome,  
 No firmer champion could have been secured  
 Than Masinissa. Blinded, I confess,  
 And caught by his incomparable prowess,  
 I purposed to estrange him from the Romans,  
 And make him the deliverer of Carthage.  
 But Syphax lives ; and I return once more,  
 Whatever fate he chuse, to be of that  
 A constant, and not quite unworthy, partner.

Sy. Thy lofty proposition deeply soothes  
 A wretched monarch, and a spouse not loved ;  
 But to a lover, as I am to thee,  
 Ardent beyond expression, it is death.  
 I have already, and a long time since,  
 Fix'd in my heart my fate, which thou, oh no !  
 Should'st never share with me. Then, lady, now  
 Listen to my entreaties and commands . . .

But I see Scipio, who towards us advances ;  
He is the only person in the world  
To whom I would address my latest accents.

## SCENE THE THIRD. ~

*Scipio, Sophonisba, Syphax.*

*Sy.* Hear me, oh Scipio.—In thy presence vanish  
Dissembling purposes : all shame departs  
That would forbid me to confess a weakness :  
Thou, although none in thy great heart abide,  
Great as thou art, conceivest them in others,  
And pitiest them humanely.—This is she,  
(Attentively regard her,) the sole cause  
Is she of all my wretchedness ; but yet  
All my affections I have placed in her.  
Thou for myself hast not yet seen me tremble ;  
Now for another I descend to prayers ;  
I am compell'd to do it . . .

*So.* Certainly  
Asdrubal's daughter causes not thy prayers.  
Am I not equally with thee secure ?—  
What, Scipio, canst thou do to me ? I, born  
A Carthaginian, enemy to Rome,  
And in the Roman camp a prisoner,  
I yet undaunted stand . . .

*Sci.* The fatal power,  
The disappointing power of destiny  
Places us all in hard extremities.  
I do not, most assuredly, exult  
In your calamities : and thou in vain  
Now in my presence makest a parade  
Of thy innate antipathy to Rome.

What though the cruelties of Annibal  
Banish from Roman bosoms all compassion,  
Thence do I not a rancorous hate indulge  
Against these enemies. If I am forced  
To meet with them in fight, victorious,  
I envy and admire them; but, subdued,  
I pity and I aid them.

*Sy.* Thence, to thee,  
That which to no man I would e'er have said,  
I trust myself to say . . .

*So.* What would'st thou say?  
Thou for thyself would'st certainly not ask  
Aught from the conqueror. Nothing e'er from him  
Would I receive; not even his compassion.  
What have you more to say? Before great Scipio  
Say who would venture to degrade himself?  
But, e'en were I degraded, to behold  
Before my eyes the spoiler of my race,  
The instrument of ultimate destruction  
To my illustrious country, that alone  
Would now inflame me with magnanimous rage.  
The foe of Scipio, though he be humane,  
I am as much as I'm the foe of Rome:  
To make myself worthy of this, I ought  
Rather in Scipio now t' excite surprise,  
Than puling tenderness.

*Sci.* Each lofty soul  
Which meets with adverse fate, almost makes me  
Abhor my own prosperity.

*So.* A joy  
Fatal, but yet a joy, glows in my breast,  
Now that I am allowed at length t' unfold  
My feelings to the noblest of the Romans.



The mingled conflicts that assail my heart,  
Thou only canst conceive, who art at once  
A perfect man and citizen.—To him,  
Cradled in Carthage, no less than to him  
Who pass'd his childhood on the Tyber's banks,  
The name of country, more than all things else,  
Is graven in the heart. Effeminate thoughts  
In me, although a woman, if they gain'd,  
Gain'd but a second place. I loved those best,  
Proud Romans, who best hated you. Your foe  
Was Masinissa once; and at the sound  
Of his magnanimous and youthful feats  
Was I inflamed. Syphax was then of Rome  
I know not whether the ally or vassal.—  
These now are my last words; I speak to Scipio,  
And to thee, Syphax: artifice avails not;  
For both of you know well the heart of man.  
The traces of our earliest impressions  
Remain profoundly graven in our breasts:  
Hence hearing that the death of Syphax gave  
Entire superiority to Rome,  
And Masinissa's image to my thoughts  
At the same time occurring, I design'd  
(Perchance my heart suggested it) to wean  
From Rome her champion, and to make of him  
A shield for Carthage and myself. Thence I  
Hither among your eagles came a foe.  
And the audacious hope that swell'd my heart  
To entice from your alliance Masinissa,  
Induced me to relinquish many duties;  
I feel the dereliction; culpable,  
And self-convicted, I proclaim my guilt;  
And I already am prepared to make

A lofty reparation. Perhaps my fate  
Led me towards you with an invisible hand,  
To give no mean impression of myself :  
Behold a path is open'd to me now  
To manifest to Rome what lofty soul  
May animate a lady born in Carthage.

*Sy.* My unexpected life, I clearly see,  
Is the sole absolute impediment  
To every view of thine : but my existence  
Will be a vain and transitory shadow.  
My real life in that same moment ceased  
When ceased my liberty : thou knowest well  
For what I did survive. I learn from thee  
Heroic fortitude. Although thy words  
Inflict a horrid torment in my heart,  
Thou should'st have told thy thoughts to me alone ;  
I left thee worthy to avenge my fate,  
And so I leave thee now ...

*So.* Oh doubt it not,  
Others remain to avenge us. Let each man  
His duty here accomplish ; mine are changed  
By thy revival.—I've divulged to thee  
The most conceal'd affections of my heart :  
This Scipio heard ; to whom I were a foe  
Unworthy, had I spoken otherwise.

*Sci.* Thy words, at once sublime and frank, convince me  
That thou esteemest me no vulgar foe.  
Ah ! that I could ...

*So.* I've said enough.—Now, Syphax,  
We should withdraw ...

*Sy.* Soon will I follow thee ...

*So.* No, no ; henceforward will I never quit thee.

*Sy.* And yet thou should'st abandon me . . .

*So.* I will not ;

And this resolve in mighty Scipio's presence  
I with an oath confirm.—Ah, come with me :  
From the so many black and horrible storms  
That now assail us, may a transient respite  
At least be granted. I, although a woman,  
Have hitherto by force restrain'd my tears :  
Oh Scipio, 'tis impossible to weep  
When thou art present : but imperious Nature  
At length will have her tribute. 'Tis the part  
Of fortitude to bear adversity ;  
But not to feel its pressure when it comes,  
Rather implies stupidity than strength.

*Sy.* Ah wretched me ! Why have I lived so  
long ? . . .

#### SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Sci.* This is a noble woman : worthy she  
To be a Roman.—I scarce check my tears.

### ACT THE FOURTH.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Masinissa, Numidian Soldiers.*

*Ma.* Let all, obeying my commands, at night  
Be ready with their steeds : and silently  
Let them, oh Boccar, ambush where I told thee.—  
Faithful Guludda, thou, at all events,  
Meanwhile be ready with the fatal bowl.  
Of every monarch 'tis the sole resource.  
Who would become the friend or enemy

Of execrable Rome.—Go hence ; and let  
Nothing of this transpire.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Masinissa.*

*Ma.* Oh Masinissa,  
Should'st thou stoop, to defend thy rights, to art ? ..  
Ne'er for myself would I do this ; but I  
Should place in safety whom I've placed in danger,  
Or perish with her.—Do I in this place,  
With difficulty, a brief audience gain ? ...  
Oh heaven ! is she then absolutely changed ? ...  
But see, she comes ... I tremble ...

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Sophonisba, Masinissa.*

*So.* I expected  
No more to see thee ; and in truth I ought not ;  
But (when thou hear'st it, canst thou trust my words ?)  
Syphax himself enjoin'd it ...

*Ma.* Influenced  
By scorn or pity ?

*So.* 'Twas magnanimous ;  
And 'tis sufficient to awake in us  
A noble emulation. He himself  
Would fain converse with thee : but he commands  
That I precede him. And that ...

*Ma.* Can I bear  
A sight like this ? ...

*So.* Art thou less great than he ?

Fears he thy presence ?

*Ma.* Nor can I tell thee first? . . .

*So.* What canst thou tell me that I ought to hear?

*Ma.* In vain dost thou inflict on me new torments :  
I would inform thee that I here enticed thee,  
And that I would, at all events, myself  
Drag thee from hence.

*So.* I gave myself to thee,  
Thou knowest it; from thee I take myself.  
A lofty duty, fatal to myself,  
Demands this sacrifice. I feel assured,  
By following Syphax, to withdraw myself  
From every ill. Do thou then now from me  
Learn to be strong. This is the camp of Rome :  
Scipio is station'd here ; a monarch, thou  
Art station'd here : and I am station'd here  
Asdrubal's daughter : tell me, would'st thou now  
That we be govern'd by a vulgar love ?

*Ma.* Ah ! with a flame far different to thine  
My bosom is consumed : . . . In thee alone  
I place my fame, my glory, and my greatness . . .  
Thou should'st be mine ; although my kingdom pe-  
rish,

The whole world perish, . . . mine thou shalt be. I  
Perils and losses neither know nor fear.  
I am prepared for all, except to lose thee ;  
And sooner . . .

*So.* Thou with having all my heart,  
Ah be thou satisfied . . . Prove not thyself  
Of this unworthy . . . But, what do I say ?  
The sight, the sight alone of Syphax, powerless,  
Vanquish'd, and captive, yet serene and firm,

Will of itself restore to thee thy reason.

*Ma.* . . . Ah wretched me! . . . Could I at least alone! . . .

But I am not less generous than you;  
I am indeed far different as a lover:  
And I prepare to yield to you of this  
A memorable proof . . .

*So.* See, here is Syphax.

*Ma.* He too may hear me; nor will you have then  
Courage to scorn me.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Syphax, Sophonisba, Masinissa.*

*Ma.* Now before thine eyes,  
Syphax, thy mortal foe presents himself.  
But thou beholdest him in such a state,  
That he no more thy indignation merits.

*Sy.* All indignation from a king in chains  
Would be ridiculous. If before me  
My rival formerly had been presented,  
While I possess'd a sword, I might have then  
Display'd to him no inefficient rage:  
Now cruel fate hath nothing left to me  
But a firm visage and impassive heart.  
Hence shalt thou hear me speak to thee with mild-  
ness.

*Ma.* My desperate and immeasurable grief  
Should be to thee no unimportant solace:  
Then learn what that grief is.—See me: I am  
Far more enchain'd than thou art, far more van-  
quish'd,  
More stripp'd of judgment, and far less a king.

Thou tookest formerly my realm ; but then  
Thou wert not, as thou'rt now, my conqueror ;  
An indefatigable foe, more fierce,  
More ardent, always I arose again  
From my defeats ; till I alternately  
Became a conqueror, regain'd my own,  
And took from thee thy realm.—But thou exult,  
Triumph ; this sublime lady yields to thee,  
Whom thou hast twice from Masinissa snatch'd,  
Entire superiority o'er me.

*So.* And wouldest thou that I indeed should blush  
At thy weak courage ? . . .

*Ma.* I've not yet given  
Proof of my courage to you : 'twill at least  
Keep pace with my despair.—You are, I see,  
Both by premeditated death sustain'd.  
Worthy of both is this resolve ; and I  
Feel its “ sublime attraction ” much as others.  
And to each one of you 'tis suitable,  
Singly consider'd. Thou, a fetter'd king,  
Longer wilt not, nor oughtest, to exist.  
Thou art determin'd, thou, the wife of Syphax,  
Daughter of Asdrubal, before all Rome  
To shew a lofty and intrepid spirit :  
Nor art thou sway'd by any impulses  
Save those of rage and hate.—But how can Syphax,  
He who adores thee, who hath been impell'd  
To his entire destruction for thy sake,  
And thy sake only ; he who doth possess  
No less an ardent than a noble heart,  
Oh heaven ! ah how . . . how can he bear to hear  
That his beloved lady is to perish ? . . .

*So.* And could he, even if he would, divert

Me from my duty ?

*Sy.* Whence canst thou thus know  
My thoughts ?

*Ma.* I, by far different furies sway'd,  
I cannot now from thee conceal my own ;  
Nor will I change them, except first I die !  
At all risks I wish Sophonisba safe,  
And she (I understand) will not be saved,  
Cannot be saved, if Syphax also is not.—  
Already my Numidians are accoutred :  
If at the gathering of the shades of night  
Thou, Syphax, to be one of these wilt feign,  
I swear to thee to be thy guide myself,  
And, with thy Sophonisba, to conduct thee,  
Unhurt and unassail'd, e'en to the gates  
Of your beloved Carthage. There may'st thou  
Collect arms, steeds, and troops ; for while a king  
Retains his freedom, he is yet unconquer'd.  
I will abandon Rome's abhorred banners,  
And I for Carthage and our Africa,  
And for thyself perchance, will henceforth fight.  
Whenever thou shalt have regain'd thy realm  
And sovereign sway, so that, as king with king,  
We to the trial of the sword may come,  
I then will claim of thee with this my sword  
This most beloved woman, whom I now  
To thee surrender for no other cause  
Than to avert from her an immature  
And undeserving death.

*So.* Thou fruitlessly  
Proposest an impracticable scheme . . .

*Sy.* His language intimates a lofty heart ;  
Me he offends not ; nay, he does impel me



Another, and more certain, means to offer,  
Easier for him, and less unworthy Syphax;  
And 'tis . . .

*Ma.* You, by adversity subdued,  
Deem that impracticable which to me  
Would be most easy; but, if honour prompt you,  
Dare and attempt with me. Always at hand  
Is death, the last and certain remedy;  
To men of courage he is always present:  
But indispensable to all of us  
He is not yet. Not till to-morrow's dawn  
Deluded Scipio of our flight will hear:  
Just as he is, and in his heart humane,  
My rights he may respect; at all events,  
Thanks to our fleet-hoof'd steeds, by break of day  
We shall have pass'd pursuit. If any one  
Should make the attempt to follow us, I swear  
That I would rather e'en in Scipio's breast  
Immerge my sword, than ever yield you to him.  
This sword of mine, which hath so many times  
Already saved me; this, whence I regain'd  
Not only my own realm but that of others,  
Will that suffice not to place both of you  
In Carthage safe? Now, for a brief while, yield,  
Oh Syphax, yield to fortune: finally,  
Yet may'st thou fly from hence; nor wilt thou be  
To me at all indebted. Foes we were,  
And foes once more we shortly may become;  
The danger of an object loved alike  
By both of us, 'tis this, and this alone,  
That silences our hatred and revenge.  
Hear me address thee suppliantly; in thee  
Is thy deliverance placed. But yet, if cruel

Thou dost, e'en more than thou dost love thy wife,  
Detest thy foe, oh wreak on him, I pray thee,  
Before thy death, a plenary revenge.  
Behold my naked sword; plunge it in me.—  
Kill me or follow me.

*Sy.* Oh Masinissa! . . .  
Amid the turbulence of thy intense  
And passionate ferocity, a ray  
Of hope yet shines to thee; thou art not conquer'd,  
Nor powerless, nor a captive: thence thou seest  
Human affairs with other eyes than mine.  
But in my heart there is conceal'd, beneath  
A brow of undisturb'd serenity,  
In my sad heart, more agonized than thine,  
There is conceal'd such a tormenting flame,  
Such grief, such desolation, and such rage,  
That language fails to represent my anguish. . . .  
Yes, my distraction never can be known  
To one, who loving, is beloved again . . .  
Ah, so much is my agony more fierce,  
Inflicted by the asps of jealousy,  
As I see Sophonisba more intent  
The affections of her lacerated heart  
Magnanimously to hide. To a severe,  
But to a worthy conflict, I'm impell'd  
By her unvanquish'd courage.—Jealous rage,  
Ambition, vengeance, all my furies yield:  
To love alone.—Now more than half the knot  
Already is unloosed. Listen to me,  
Oh lady. I love thee, for thy sake only,  
Nor for myself: hence had I, as a spouse,  
Rather myself resign thee to another,  
Than for my sake behold thee die in vain.

*So.* What do I hear? ... What dar'st thou say to me? ...

*Sy.* I hope that thou wilt hear thy consort's prayers ;  
And where his prayers suffice not, wilt obey  
His last commands.—The wife of Masinissa  
Thou hither camest ... I restore thee now  
To Masinissa, wife.

*So.* Ah ! no ...

*Sy.* Oh thou  
Who could'st protect her when she was not thine,  
Now that I've made her thine, wilt do it better.—  
Farewell for ever. To pursue my steps  
Let none of you presume.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Masinissa, Sophonisba.*

*So.* No power on earth  
Shall now prevent me from pursuing thee.—  
Farewell, ah Masinissa !

SCENE THE SIXTH.

*Masinissa.*

*Mu.* Oh despair ! ...  
Brief is the time : ... both of them would forestall  
me ...  
I only fear to be less swift than they.

## ACT THE FIFTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Scipio, Centurions.*

*Sci.* Already I know all. Let each of you  
Watch as the guardians of the Roman tents  
During the approaching night : but I give  
An express order to you, that you should  
Abstain with care from vexing the Numidians  
With obstacles or insults. Go from hence ;  
Let all things pass in quietness.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Scipio.*

*Sci.* Thy rage  
Thou should'st have wreak'd against my breast alone,  
Ungrateful Masinissa ; or on me  
Its violence, like billows on a rock,  
Should have been broken.—But confused he bears  
His wavering steps towards me ; perchance he knows  
The destiny of Syphax . . . How I feel  
Pity for him !—Ah ! come to me ; ah come ! . . .

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Scipio, Masinissa, Numidian Soldiers at a distance.*

*Ma.* Here, oh Guludda, wait for me.—Prepared  
I was not for this meeting.

*Sci.* What, would'st thou  
Avoid me ? I am evermore thy Scipio :

Thou now in vain seekest thyself elsewhere ;  
I only can restore thee to thyself.

*Ma.* I was bereft of reason on that day  
In which I made with you a guilty traffic  
Of life and honour for degrading chains.  
But for this step perchance I yet may make  
The due atonement ; and 'twill be sublime.  
Then wilt thou see that I have perfectly  
Regain'd my reason.

*Sci.* I've already told thee,  
Thou may'st, oh Masinissa, yet destroy me :  
But while I breathe thou art constrain'd to hear me.

*Ma.* Time fails me now for this . . .

*Sci.* Time fails thee now !  
But what dost thou expect ? Thy stratagems  
Divulged to me are all : clandestinely  
Armed and accoutred, thy Numidians stand  
Within their tents ; thou hast resolved from hence  
To rescue Syphax, and with him . . .

*Ma.* If thou  
Already know'st so much ; if the base arts  
Of a tyrannical spy have so far urged thee,  
That thou hast purchased those who would betray me  
E'en 'mong my troops, to consummate thy task  
Add force to stratagem, since thou canst boast  
More soldiers than myself. Thou seest me  
Always prepared to die ; never to change.

*Sci.* Thou wrongest Scipio, and he pardons thee.  
Towards thee no other weapon will I use  
Than that of truth ; with that will I subdue thee.  
Thy Sophonisba, who loves thee so much,  
(Would'st thou believe it ?) she herself erewhile  
Fully revealed to me thy stratagems . . .

*Ma.* What do I hear? Oh heaven!...

*Sci.* I swear to thee,  
Oh Masinissa, that I speak the truth.  
Erewhile, by his express command, she was  
Refused admittance to the tent of Syphax;  
Hence, stung to agony by rage and grief,  
All thy designs to me did she divulge.  
But she divulged in vain: thou hast the power  
Still, if thou wilt, to rescue her from hence.  
Carthage in thee her champion may possess;  
I interdict it not: the injury

On me alone will fall; on me alone,  
Who, at one stroke, my fame, my friend shall lose.  
But ah! may heaven avert, that finally  
Greater calamities o'erwhelm thee not.

*Ma.* She!... Sophonisba!... For thy sake betray  
My interest!... 'Tis incredible. From whence...

*Sci.* She, far superior to her destiny,  
Intends to give thee other proofs of love.  
To stern necessity the loftiest yield:  
The last and desperate resolve of Syphax.  
Gives to her noble heart a strong incentive.

*Ma.* What meanest thou by these ambiguous  
words?...

Of what proof speakest thou?... Of what resolve  
Of Syphax?...

*Sci.* What! dost thou not know it? Scarce  
Was Syphax in his tent arrived, than swift  
As lightning, on the sword of the centurion,  
That as a guard was station'd there, he rush'd;  
The hilt he planted on the earth, and fell,  
Collecting all his might, upon the blade...:

*Ma.* Oh blest, thrice blest is he! Thus is he freed.

From execrable Rome . . .

*Sci.* With his last breath  
He order'd that admission there should be  
To Sophonisba forcibly denied.

*Ma.* And she . . . Ah, now I clearly comprehend  
The horror of her state ! But oh, too far  
Is mine remote from Syphax' destiny !  
Conquer'd by thee, by his own hand he fell :  
I, not as yet subdued, would be destroyed  
By a Roman sword, but by that sword in fight.

*Sci.* Ah no ! thou oughtest not like them to perish :  
Rather than death, and worthier of thyself,  
Sublimer fortitude thy life would shew.

*Ma.* Live without her ! . . . I have not power to  
do it . . .

Cannot I rescue her by any means ? . . .  
I will yet see her only once more.

*Sci.* Ah !

Assuredly her converse may avail,  
More than I can avail, to re-excite  
Its noble impulses within thy breast.—  
Behold her ; 'tis her wish to plant herself  
Near to my tent. Before the eyes of Rome,  
And in the presence of all Africa,  
She wishes to fulfil each cruel duty.  
Hear her ; with her I leave thee : Scipio  
In both of you confides ; thou canst not bear  
Her to surpass thee in sublimity.

#### SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Sophonisba, Scipio, Masinissa.*

*So.* Ah ! pause, oh Scipio. I repair'd to thee ;

And me dost thou avoid ?

*Sci.* A sacred duty  
Enjoins that I prepare for the dead king  
A splendid funeral pile . . .

*So.* Hither at least,  
I pray thee, soon return. This will henceforth  
Be my perpetual dwelling place ; and here  
I swear to wait for thee.

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Sophonisba, Masinissa.*

*Ma.* Perfidious lady !  
And dost thou also to inhuman pride  
Add treachery ?

*So.* Treachery !

*Ma.* Treachery, yes ; while I  
Prepare to save you, or to die for you,  
Thyself revealest my design to Scipio.

*So.* — Syphax allowed me not to die with him.

*Ma.* He wish'd thee safe with me.

*So.* Already he  
His freedom had regain'd ; that which I seek,  
And shall obtain.—I cannot, if my fame  
I would not forfeit, from the Roman camp  
Withdraw myself with thee. With a true love  
Too much thou lovest and hast loved me,  
That I should save myself at such a risk :  
I am too worthy of thy tenderness,  
E'er to allow thee to do this. I have,  
In making manifest thy purposes,  
Taken nought from thee but the fatal power  
My honour and thy glory to betray.



*Ma.* Thou art deceived ; nought hast thou taken  
from me.

Yet I may all achieve : rivers of blood  
I yet may shed : all mine I will pour out  
Ere I leave thee a slave ! . . .

*So.* Am I a slave ?

Such dost thou now account me ?

*Ma.* In the power  
Of Rome art thou.

*So.* Of Rome ! As yet I am  
In my own power ; or in thy power, if thou  
Feel'st for me yet the pity of a king.

*Ma.* Thou mak'st me tremble . . . on thy coun-  
tenance

I see a horrible security,  
The harbinger of voluntary death . . .  
But I would lead thee . . .

*So.* All, all will be vain :

There is no force on earth that can avail  
To counteract my will, which is in me  
The child of duty. Indispensable,  
Immutable, impending, is my death,  
And 'twill, I hope, be free ; although I am  
Of all things destitute ; although I left  
In Cirta, inadvertently, the last,  
The only friend of subjugated kings,  
My faithful poison ; from my lover's lips  
Although I heard a sacred solemn oath,  
That he would wrest me from the hands of Rome ; . .  
An oath committed to the vagrant winds.  
Amid these haughty eagles yet a queen,  
Daughter of Asdrubal, no less secure,  
No less collected in myself I stand

Than if in Carthage, or within my palace,—  
But thou, thou speakest not. . . . Distracted looks,  
Swimming with tears, thou fixest on the ground. . . .  
Ah! trust me, my affliction equals thine . . .

*Ma.* The effect of each is different : destitute  
Of courage, weaker than the weakest woman,  
Trembling I stand ; while thou . . .

*So.* The state of each  
May be dissimilar : not so our hearts . . .  
Believe my words : although I do not weep,  
I feel my bosom rack'd with agony :  
I am a woman ; nor make I parade  
Of virile courage : but there doth remain  
No path for me to take save that of death.  
If I had loved thee less, I might perchance  
Have been the partner of thy flight to Carthage ;  
And, at the price of my renown, have gain'd  
A short-lived vengeance, with thy troops, o'er Rome :  
But I would not expose thee, for my sake,  
To an unprofitable risk. The fall  
Of Carthage is inevitable now :  
Ill can a corrupt and discordant city  
Cope with united and harmonious Rome.  
I should have lived too long if I had seen,  
On my account, my country overwhelm'd,  
And thee with it hurl'd headlong to destruction.  
Faithful remain to Rome ; continue still  
A grateful friend to mighty Scipio.  
To raise thee to great power, to give thy virtues  
An ample scope for action, all this now  
My death can do, and nothing but my death.  
Thy good, e'en more than mine, to this compels me . . .  
*Ma.* Dost count me then so vile as to expect

That I should struggle to survive thy death?

*So.* I wish thee to excel me: and to prove  
Thy brighter excellence thou should'st survive;  
And in the name of thy renown do I  
Enjoin thee to do this. To thee would death  
Be a disgrace; for to it love alone  
Could prompt thee: life were a disgrace to me,  
Since love alone could force me to endure it.  
My death, thou know'st, is indispensable;  
To me thou swarest it; and such a gift  
Would yet be grateful to me from thy hands:  
Not by refusing it canst thou avert  
My settled purpose. In this very place,  
Before the camp, immoveable and mute,  
Yet three more days, which I shall add to this,  
In which I have not slaked my burning thirst  
E'en with a draught of water, will give me  
Entire ascendancy o'er Rome. But ah!  
Is there compassion in thee; thus to leave me  
To a protracted agonizing death,  
When thou hadst promised to procure me one  
Both brief and dignified... Fool that I was!  
Trusting in thee alone, I hither came...

*Ma.* Thou on our death hast then resolved?...

*So.* On mine.

If madly thou, against my express will,  
Turnest thy arms against thyself, now hear  
A furious threat, and if thou dare, defy it;  
I will be dragg'd a living slave to Rome,  
And will ascribe to thee my infamy...  
Ere the return of Scipio, I conjure thee,  
Restore me, thou, to perfect liberty;  
If thou art not forsworn.

*Ma.* What dost thou ask? . . .  
Oh Heaven! . . . I cannot arm thee with my sword . .  
Thy dubious aim . . .

*So.* The sword requires, 'tis true,  
A hand accustomed to its management.  
A bowl of speedy and effective poison  
Were more adapted to my female courage.  
I see not far from hence thy faithful son  
Guludda; for thy sake he always bears it;  
Call him; I am resolved.

*Ma.* Oh day of woe!—  
Give me that bowl, Guludda.—Now go thou  
Wait for me at my tent.—And is this then,  
Is this at once the first and latest pledge  
Of my unbounded love, which thou would'st wrest  
By force from me? . . . Too certainly I see  
That thou on no terms will consent to live;  
And to a long and agonizing death  
I cannot leave thee.—I will not shed tears, . . .  
Because thou weapest not: behold, to thee  
The deadly potion I present myself  
With tearless eyes . . . but only on condition,  
That in its contents I shall have my share . . .

*So.* Yes, thou shalt have it, as thou meritest.  
Now of my lofty love at length thou'rt worthy.  
Give me the bowl.

*Ma.* Oh Heaven! . . . Hand and heart  
I tremble . . .

*So.* Why delay? Ere Scipio comes  
The deed must be accomplish'd . . .

*Ma.* Take the bowl.  
Alas! What have I done? Oh agony! . . .

*So.* I've quaff'd it to the dregs: I see already

Scipio returns.

*Ma.* Dost thou deceive me thus ?  
I have a sword remaining yet ; and I  
Will follow thee.<sup>1</sup>

SCENE THE SIXTH.

*Scipio, Masinissa, Sophonisba.*

*Sci.* Ah no ! While I have breath . . .

*Ma.* Ah traitor ! In thy bosom I will then  
Take vengeance for that immolated lady.

*Sci.* Behold my breast defenceless : I will loose,  
That I may be thy victim, thy right-hand ;  
Except for this, in vain thou wishest it.

*So.* Oh Masinissa, if thou dar'st, I hate thee . . .

*Sci.* Me, me alone, thy hand may immolate ;  
But, while I live, thou shalt not turn thy sword  
Against thy own breast.

*Ma.* —I am once more myself.—  
Scipio, of all hast thou bereft me now,  
E'en to my sense of honour.

*So.* Thankless man ! . . .  
Canst thou calumniate Scipio ? He grants me,  
As he has granted Syphax, a free death ;  
While perhaps he might have interdicted it :  
By dint of force he wrests thee from the shame  
Of an effeminate opprobrious death :  
And darest thou, ungrateful, darest thou.

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<sup>1</sup> He is about to stab himself ; Scipio, strenuously holding back his arm, prevents his doing it.

Calumniate Scipio? Yield, ah yield to him!  
He is at once thy brother, father, friend.

*Ma.* Now leave me: thou in vain dost check my  
rage.

Death... death... I yet...

*So.* Ah Scipio... leave him not:  
Out of my sight elsewhere drag him by force:  
He was born great, and thy sublime example  
To greatness may restore him: from the world,  
From Rome, conceal his weakness... I... already...  
Feel my tongue palsied... and my blood congeal'd...  
To him I give not... not to rend his heart...  
The last farewell,—Ah drag him hence... I pray  
thee;

And me... leave me to die,... as ought to die  
Asdrubal's daughter... in the... Roman camp.

*Ma.* Ah!... By despair... by grief... I am bereft  
Of all my strength... I scarce can breathe... much  
less

Inflict... a blow...

*Sci.* Come; I will use towards thee  
The violence of a friend:<sup>2</sup> I will not leave thee..  
Nor ever shall thy grief destroy thy life,  
If with thyself thou do not slay thy Scipio.

---

<sup>2</sup> Dragging him forcibly towards the tents.

# THE FIRST BRUTUS.

## A TRAGEDY.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BRUTUS.	VALERIUS.
COLLATINUS.	<i>People.</i>
TITUS.	<i>Senators.</i>
TIBERIUS.	<i>Conspirators.</i>
MAMILIUS.	<i>Lictors.</i>

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SCENE,—The Forum in Rome.

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### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Brutus, Collatinus.*

*Col.* Ah where, ah where, oh Brutus, would'st thou thus

Drag me by force? Quickly restore to me  
This sword of mine, which with beloved blood  
Is reeking yet . . .—In my own breast . . .

*Bru.* Ah! first

This sword, now sacred, in the breast of others  
Shall be immersed, I swear to thee.—Meanwhile  
'Tis indispensable, that in this forum  
Thy boundless sorrow, and my just revenge,  
Burst unreservedly before the eyes

Of universal Rome.

*Col.* Ah no! I will  
Withdraw myself from every human eye.  
To my unparallel'd calamity  
All remedies are vain; the sword, this sword  
Alone can put an end to my distress.

*Bru.* Oh Collatinus, a complete revenge  
Would surely be some solace; and I swear  
To thee, that that revenge thou shalt obtain.—  
Oh! of a chaste and innocent Roman lady  
Thou sacred blood, to-day shalt thou cement  
The edifice of Roman liberty.

*Col.* Ah! could my heart indulge a hope like this!  
The hope, ere death, of universal vengeance...

*Bru.* Hope? Be assured of it. At length, behold  
The morn is dawning of the wish'd-for day:  
To-day my lofty, long-projected plan  
At length may gain a substance and a form.  
Thou, from a wrong'd unhappy spouse, may'st now  
Become the avenging citizen: e'en thou  
Shalt bless that innocent blood: and then if thou  
Wilt give thy own, it will not be in vain  
For a true country shed... A country, yes,  
Which Brutus will to-day create with thee,  
Or die with thee in such an enterprise.

*Col.* Oh! what a sacred name dost thou pronounce!  
I, for a genuine country's sake alone,  
Could now survive my immolated wife.

*Bru.* Ah! then resolve to live; co-operate  
With me in this attempt. A God inspires me;  
A God infuses ardour in my breast,  
Who thus exhorts me: "It belongs to thee,  
" Oh Collatinus, and to thee, oh Brutus,



"To give both life and liberty to Rome."

*Col.* Worthy of Brutus is thy lofty hope :  
I should be vile if I defeated it.

Or, from the impious Tarquins wholly rescued,  
Our country shall from us new life obtain ;  
Or we (but first avenged) with her will fall.

*Bru.* Whether enslaved or free, we now shall fall  
Illustrious and revenged. My horrible oath  
Perhaps thou hast not well heard ; the oath I utter'd,  
When from Lucretia's palpitating heart  
The dagger I dislodged which still I grasp.  
Deaf from thy mighty grief, thou, in thy house,  
Scarce heardest it ; here once more wilt thou hear it,  
By my own lips, upon th' inanimate corse  
Of thy unhappy immolated wife,  
And in the presence of assembled Rome,  
More strenuously, more solemnly renew'd.  
Already, with the rising sun, the forum  
With apprehensive citizens is fill'd ;  
Already, by Valerius' means, the cry  
Is to the multitude promulgated  
Of th' impious catastrophe : th' effect  
Will be far stronger on their heated hearts  
When they behold the chaste and beauteous lady  
With her own hands destroy'd. In their disdain,  
As much as in my own, shall I confide.  
But more than every man thou should'st be present :  
Thine eyes from the distracting spectacle  
Thou may'st avert : to thy affliction this  
May be allow'd : yet here should'st thou remain :  
E'en more than my impassion'd words, thy mute  
And boundless grief is fitted to excite  
Th' oppress'd spectators to indignant pity . . .

*Col.* Oh Brutus ! the divinity which speaks  
In thee, to lofty and ferocious rage,  
Hath changed my grief already. The last words  
Of the magnanimous Lucretia, seem,  
In a more awful and impressive sound,  
To echo in my ears, and smite my heart.  
Can I be less inflexible t' avenge,  
Than she to inflict her voluntary death ?  
In th' infamous Tarquinius's blood alone  
Can I wash out the stigma of the name,  
Common to me and them !

*Bru.* Ah ! I too spring  
From their impure and arbitrary blood :  
But Rome shall be convinced that I'm her son,  
Not of the Tarquin's sister : and as far  
As blood not Roman desecrates my veins,  
I swear to change it all by shedding it  
For my beloved country.—But, behold,  
The multitude increases : hitherward  
Numbers advance : now it is time to speak.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Brutus, Collatinus, People.*

*Bru.* Romans, to me, to me, oh Romans, come :  
Great things have I t' impart to you.

*People.* Oh Brutus,  
Can that indeed which we have heard be true ?

*Bru.* Behold ; this is the dagger reeking yet,  
Yet warm, with th' innocent blood-drops of a chaste  
And Roman lady, slain by her own hands.  
Behold her husband ; he is mute ; yet weeps  
And shudders. Yet he lives, but lives alone

For vengeance, till he sees by your hands torn,  
The heart torn piece-meal of that impious Sextius,  
That sacrilegious ravisher and tyrant.  
And I live yet ; but only till the day,  
When, wholly disencumber'd of the Tarquins,  
I see Rome free once more.

*People.* Oh most unparallel'd,  
Calamitous catastrophe ! . . .

*Bru.* I see  
That all of you upon th' unhappy spouse  
Have fix'd your motionless and speaking eyes,  
Swimming with tears, and by amazement glazed.  
Yes, Romans, look at him ; ah see in him,  
Ye brothers, fathers, and ye husbands, see  
Your infamy reflected. Thus reduced,  
Death on himself he cannot now inflict ;  
Nor can he life endure if unavenged . . .  
But vain, inopportune, desist from tears,  
And from astonishment.—Romans, towards me,  
Turn towards me, Romans, your ferocious looks :  
Perhaps from my eyes, ardent with liberty,  
Ye may collect some animating spark  
Which may inflame you with its fostering heat.  
I Junius Brutus am ; whom long ye deem'd,  
Since I so feign'd myself, bereft of reason ;  
And such I feign'd myself, since doom'd to live  
The slave of tyrants, I indulged a hope  
One day to rescue, by a shock of vengeance,  
Myself and Rome from their ferocious claws.  
At length the day, predestined by the gods,  
The hour, for my exalted scheme is come.  
From this time forth 'tis in your power to rise  
From slaves (for such ye were) to men. I ask

Alone to die for you ; so that I die  
The first free man and citizen in Rome.

*People.* What have we heard ? What majesty,  
what force,  
Breathe in his words ! .. But we, alas ! are powerless :  
Can we confront arm'd and ferocious tyrants ? ...

*Bru.* Ye powerless, ye ? What is it that you say ?  
What ? Do ye then so little know yourselves ?  
The breast of each already was inflamed  
With just and inextinguishable hate  
Against the impious Tarquins : now, e'en now,  
Ye shall behold before your eyes display'd  
The last, most execrable, fatal proof,  
Of their flagitious arbitrary power.  
To-day to your exalted rage, the rage  
Of Collatinus, and my own, shall be  
A guide, an impulse, a pervading spirit.  
Ye have resolved on liberty ; and ye  
Deem yourselves powerless ? And do you esteem  
The tyrants arm'd ? What force have they, what  
arms ?

The arms, the force of Romans ? Who is there,  
The Roman who, that would not sooner die,  
Than here, or in the camp, for Rome's oppressors,  
Equip himself with arms ?—By my advice,  
Lucretius with his daughter's blood aspersed,  
Hath to the camp repaired : this very moment  
By the brave men besieging hostile Ardea,  
Hath he been heard : and certainly  
In hearing him, and seeing him, those men  
Have turn'd their arms against their guilty tyrants,  
Or swift in our defence, abandoning  
Their impious banners, hitherward they fly.

The honour of the earliest enterprise  
Against the tyrants, citizens, would ye  
Consent indeed to yield to other men?

*People.* Oh, with what just and lofty hardihood  
Dost thou inflame our breasts!—What can we fear,  
If all have the same will?

*Col.* Your noble rage,  
Your generous indignation, thoroughly  
Recall me back to life. Nothing can I  
Express ... to you ... for tears ... forbid ... my ut-  
terance ...

But let my sword be my interpreter;  
I first unsheathe it, and to earth I cast,  
Irrevocably cast, the useless scabbard.  
Oh sword, I swear to plunge thee in my breast,  
Or in the breast of kings.—Oh husbands, fathers,  
Be ye the first to follow me! ... But ah!  
What spectacle is this? ...<sup>2</sup>

*People.* Atrocious sight!  
Behold the murder'd lady in the forum ...

*Bru.* Yes, Romans, fix, (if ye have power to do it),  
Fix on that immolated form your eyes.  
That mute fair form, that horrible generous wound,  
That pure and sacred blood, ah! all exclaim,  
"To-day resolve on liberty, or ye  
"Are doom'd to death. Nought else remains."<sup>3</sup>

*People.* All, all,  
Yes, free we all of us will be, or dead.

<sup>2</sup> In the farther part of the stage the body of Lucretia is introduced, followed by a great multitude.

*Bru.* Then listen now to Brutus.—The same dagger

Which from her dying side he lately drew,  
Above that innocent illustrious lady  
Brutus now lifts ; and to all Rome he swears  
That which first on her very dying form  
He swore already.—While I wear a sword,  
While vital air I breathe, in Rome henceforth  
No Tarquin e'er shall put his foot ; I swear it :  
Nor the abominable name of king,  
Nor the authority, shall any man  
Ever again possess.—May the just Gods  
Annihilate him here, if Brutus is not  
Lofty and true of heart !—Further I swear,  
Many as are th' inhabitants of Rome,  
To make them equal, free, and citizens ;  
Myself a citizen, and nothing more :  
The laws alone shall have authority,  
And I will be the first to yield them homage.

*People.* The laws, the laws alone : we with one voice

To thine our oaths unite. And be a fate,  
Worse than the fate of Collatinus, ours,  
If we are ever perjured !

*Bru.* These, these are  
True Roman accents. Tyranny and tyrants,  
At your accordant hearty will alone,  
All, all have vanish'd. Nothing now is needful  
Except 'gainst them to close the city gates ;  
Since fate to us propitious had already  
Sequester'd them from Rome.

*People.* But you meanwhile  
Will be to us at once consuls and fathers ;

You to us wisdom, we our arms to you,  
Our swords, our hearts, will lend . . .

*Bru.* In your august  
And sacred presence, on each lofty cause,  
We always will deliberate: there cannot  
From the collected people's majesty  
Be any thing conceal'd. But it is just  
That the patricians and the senate bear  
A part in every thing. At the new tidings  
They are not all assembled here: enough  
(Alas! too much so) th' iron rod of power  
Has smitten them with terror: now yourselves  
To the sublime contention of great deeds  
Shall summon them. Here then we will unite,  
Patricians and plebeians; and by us  
Freedom a stable basis shall receive.  
*People.* From this day forth we shall begin to live.

## ACT THE SECOND.

### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Brutus, Titus.*

*Tit.* All the patricians were invited, father,  
As thou commandedst, to th' august assembly.  
The fourth hour now approaches; thou wilt have  
The whole of Rome subservient to thy nod.  
It almost doth bereave me of my reason  
To see thee lord of Rome.

*Bru.* Thou seest me  
Lord of myself, and not of Rome, oh Titus:  
Nor shall you have a lord in any shape  
In Rome henceforward. This by her I swear;

I, who till now was a vile slave. Oh sons,  
Ye saw me such, while with the tyrant's children  
I educated you for servitude  
In a corrupted court. Alas ! I could not  
Sow in your hearts the seeds of liberty,  
A trembling and degraded father : hence  
Ye are a cause, ye the most special cause,  
Whence I should triumph in recover'd freedom.  
My independent animating carriage  
Will instigate you more to excellence,  
Than my anterior servitude to baseness.  
Contented for my country shall I die,  
When I with confidence shall leave my sons  
The associates of free-born citizens.

*Tit.* Father, there needed to thy lofty heart,  
Whose lustre always broke upon thy sons,  
A field no less magnificent for action  
Than that which fortune opens to thee now.  
Ah, might we in the noble enterprize  
Assist thee ! But the obstacles are many,  
And they are terrible. The multitude  
Is in itself inconstant : to the Tarquins  
What manifold resources yet remain ! . . .

*Bru.* Were there no obstacle remaining yet,  
The enterprize were dangerless, and thence  
Unworthy Brutus : but if Brutus fear'd them,  
He were unworthy to accomplish it.—  
To the immutable, lofty, austere,  
Peremptory decision of thy father,  
Do thou thy youthful vehemence unite ;  
Thus at once son of Brutus and of Rome  
Shalt thou be, Titus.—But thy brother comes . . .  
Hear we what news he brings.



## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Tiberius, Titus, Brutus.*

*Tib.* Beloved father,  
Never could I have met thee in the forum  
More opportunely. Wild with joy thou seest me :  
I sought for thee. Breathless from too much haste  
I am : with impulses ne'er felt before,  
I am at once transported and oppress'd.  
I have just seen the execrable Tarquins,  
And trembled not . . .

*Tit.* Where was it ?

*Bru.* Where ? . . .

*Tib.* I am

By my own eyes persuaded that the tyrant  
Is of all men the least. The haughty king,  
With impious Sextius, scarce had heard that Rome  
Had risen in tumult, ere he left the camp ;  
And with a chosen escort towards the city  
Fled with full speed : and here were they arrived  
At the Carmental gate . . .

*Tit.* Precisely there  
Where thou wert sentinel.

*Tib.* Blest that I am !

I first against the tyrants, I the first  
My sword unsheathed.—The iron gate was closed,  
And fortified : in its defence myself,  
With twenty other armed Romans, paced,  
Accoutred all, exterior to the gate,  
With circumambient vigilance. Behold,  
With cries, with howlings, and with menaces,  
The troop, twice ours in number, rush'd towards us.

To hear, to see, to recognize the miscreants,  
To fall upon them with our weapons, seem'd  
The labour of an instant. In ourselves  
There was a strength and rage unlike to theirs :  
Tyrants, they thought that they were meeting slaves :  
But soon they learn'd that liberty and death,  
Like twin-born instincts, hover'd round our swords.  
Already ten or more had we destroy'd ;  
The residue, and Tarquin first of these,  
Betook themselves to flight. Upon their heels  
Fiercely and long we press'd, but press'd in vain ;  
Fear gave them wings. I afterwards return'd  
To my appointed post beside the gate ;  
And, warm yet with the victory, swift I come  
To thee to tell it.

*Bru.* Trifling though it be,  
Such sample of our prowess should be deem'd  
An omen of prosperity to Rome,  
Fain would I in that fray have borne a part ;  
For nothing so intensely do I covet  
As to confront them in the strife of blood.  
Oh ! wherefore in the forum and the camp  
Cannot I tongue, and intellect, and sword,  
All, all at once exert ! But with such sons  
I can with ease be many things at once.

*Tib.* Still have I more to tell thee. When to flight  
I had these miscreants driven, as I return'd  
Towards the walls, the sound of steeds I heard  
Behind, advancing on our homeward path ;  
Backward I look'd, and lo ! there came towards us .  
A single horseman from the tyrant's train.  
His right-hand weaponless he raised ; no sword  
Guarded his side ; an olive-branch he held

In his left-hand ; beckoning to me, he cried :  
I halted ; he advanced ; the messenger  
Of peace, in supplicating tones he ask'd  
Admission into Rome. T' enunciate  
Conditions and apologies, he comes  
To Brutus and the senate.

*Bru.* To the people—

For Brutus is a portion of the people,  
Or he is nothing. And the herald is? . . .

*Tib.* Mamilius: strict injunctions to my troops  
Without the gates I gave to guard him well.  
I came to know what must be done with him.

*Bru.* He comes at the right time. This messenger  
Could not have chosen to present himself  
A day more solemn or more opportune.  
Go, to the gate return ; seek him ; with thee  
Quickly conduct him hither. If he dare,  
Here shall he speak to universal Rome :  
And here, an answer not of Rome unworthy  
He will, I hope, receive.

*Tib.* To him I fly.

#### SCENE THE THIRD.

*Brutus, Titus.*

*Bru.* Meanwhile go thou to meet the senators ;  
See in the forum that they yield to them  
The most conspicuous places. Even now  
The concourse of the multitude increases ;  
And several of the senators I see.  
Go hence ; oh Titus, go without delay.

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Brutus, People, Senators, and Patricians, who place themselves successively in the Forum.*

*Bru.* Oh thou supreme discerner of those thoughts  
Which lurk most privily in human breasts !  
Thou who dost see and dost inflame my heart !  
Rome's great protector, everlasting Jove !  
Give me, I pray thee, language, sense, and ardour  
To the great cause proportion'd . . . Yes, oh Jove,  
This wilt thou do, if it be true that thou  
Hast chosen me to be the instrument  
Of liberty, thy first and genuine blessing.

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Brutus, having mounted the Rostrum, Valerius, Titus, People, Senators, Patricians.*

*Bru.* I come, oh fellow-citizens, to make  
To you all strict confession of my deeds.  
With one consent you have appointed me  
And Collatinus to a dignity  
Without a precedent in Rome : the lictors,  
The fasces, and the hatchets (hitherto  
Th' insignia of kings) ye have been pleased  
T' annex to our elective annual office.  
Yet not for this hath the malignant taint  
Of mad ambition crept into my heart ;  
With honours, no, (though yours are real ones,)  
I'm not transported ; but with liberty,  
With love for Rome, and with implacable,  
Fierce, and eternal hatred for the Tarquins.

These are my sole pretensions; and may each  
Of you in such a noble strife excel me;  
I have no wish beyond.

*People.* Thy dignified  
And manly aspect, Brutus, thy frank speech,  
All, all announce in thee to us the sire  
Of Rome and of the Romans.

*Bru.* Oh my sons,  
My genuine sons, (since with the name of father  
Ye have been pleased to honour me,) I hope  
Shortly to shew you, by no doubtful proofs,  
That beyond all things, e'en myself, I love you.—  
My colleague arm'd is from the city gone,  
With many heroes, to the camp, to meet  
And safely to collect those who have left  
Justly the standard of our vile oppressors.  
People, patricians, knights, and senators,  
I all of you assemble in the forum;  
Since the great cause of all I wish to treat  
Before you all convened. Now every Roman  
Is so inalienably a part of Rome,  
That nothing but his own degeneracy  
Can from her solemn meetings banish him.—  
Noble patricians, ye, the scanty remnant,  
Uninjured by th' exterminating sword  
Of the despotic king; and ye, their flower,  
Oh senators, ye will not be averse  
To mingle with a free and manly people.  
Ah no, ye are too lofty. All around,  
Far as I cast my eyes, I see all Romans;  
And there are none of them unworthy you,  
Since among us there are no longer kings.—  
Trembling and insecure, kings hitherto

Our lips have seal'd : nor was there left for us  
 Any alternative, except to load  
 Ourselves with infamy, giving assent  
 To their iniquitous flagitious laws ;  
 Or, if the courage rose in us, to oppose  
 Ourselves to them in vain, to be the first  
 To fall the luckless victims of their rage.

*Va.* Brutus, thy words are true.—I, in the name  
 Of all the senators, appeal to Rome.  
 Too true indeed are they.—We a long time  
 On Rome's obscurest citizens reduced  
 To look with envy ; more than any culprit  
 Forced to despise ourselves ; what need more words ?  
 Besides our portion in the common load  
 Of execrable servitude, compell'd  
 In the dark mysteries of tyranny  
 To take a part, we, yes, we sunk ourselves  
 Below the lowest people ; and we were so.  
 Nor to the multitude should one of us  
 Hope to seem guiltless, save the many slain  
 By th' impious royal axe. Nought else remains  
 To us to-day, then, but to reunite  
 Our heartiest efforts with the noble people's ;  
 Nor otherwise to covet to surpass them,  
 Except in hate to kings. This sacred hate  
 Will be th' eternal, sublime base of Rome.  
 We then, yes, we, by the infernal gods,  
 By our own blood, and by our children's blood,  
 Swear it ferociously with one accord.

*People.* Oh noble ! oh magnanimous ! Oh ye  
 Alone now worthy to surpass us ! We  
 Gladly accept the noble strife of virtue.  
 What people now will undertake to cope,

Much less the vanquish'd execrable kings,  
(Already vanquish'd by their turpitude,)  
With us, at once Romans and citizens?

*Bru.* Immortal contest! superhuman words!...  
I die contented: I for once at least  
Have utter'd accents worthy of a Roman;  
And have indeed with these my ears once heard  
True Roman eloquence. Now since Rome trusts  
Herself to us wholly for her defence,  
Without her walls I instantly depart;  
And to you day by day of all our schemes  
My colleague or myself will give account;  
Until, our arms laid down, in perfect peace  
Ye give a stable government to Rome.

*People.* 'Tis needful first wholly to disconcert,  
Defeat, and slay the tyrants.

*Bru.* I, in this,  
And nothing else, will be your chief.—Be pleased  
Briefly to hear a messenger of theirs;  
He, in their name, solicits to address you.  
Would you believe it? Tarquin, and with him  
The impious Sextius, and a few more, dared  
Erewhile to make incursion with full speed  
Almost to Rome; thinking to come to us  
As to a timorous flock, vain-glorious fools!  
But they in this were much deceived; my son  
Tiberius the honour robb'd from me  
Of first attacking them. The miscreants  
Betook themselves from him by sudden flight:  
Descending thence from force to art, they dare  
To send to you as an ambassador  
Mamilius. What may be the unworthy terms  
Will you be pleased to hear?

*People.* There are 'twixt us  
No other terms except their death or ours.

*Bru.* This let him hear then, and report.

*People.* To us  
Now let this servile herald quickly come.  
Let him too hear the sentiments of Rome,  
And bear them back to him who sent him hither.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

*Brutus, Titus, Tiberius, Mamilius, Valerius, People,  
Senators, Patricians.*

*Bru.* Mamilius, come, advance ; examine well  
By whom thou art surrounded. In the court  
Of Tarquin thou, effeminately nursed,  
Hast never yet seen Rome ; this, this is she,  
Behold her undisguised, and patiently  
Prepared to hear thy message. Now proceed.

*Ma.* Oh Brutus, with no unimportant words  
Was I commission'd to bespeak thy hearing :  
But in this vast assembly, . . . to divulge . . .  
Without premeditation . . .

*Bru.* Audibly  
Address thyself to all, and not to me.  
Sublime announcer of the will of kings,  
Divulge it to the people, to the senate :  
Brutus will also hear thee with the rest.

*People.* Speak, speak to all ; and thou of all shalt  
hear,  
In a few words, the answer, from the mouth  
Of our great consul Brutus. See in him  
Our genuine interpreter ; alone  
Worthy to be the organ of our thoughts..



Make haste, proceed : and brief be thy harangue :  
Frank and explicit shall our answer be.

*Bru.* Heard'st thou ?

*Ma.* I tremble. Tarquin, king ...

*People.* Not king  
Of Rome ...

*Ma.* —Of Rome, Tarquin the friend and father ..

*People.* He is the father of the impious Sextius,  
And not of us ...

*Bru.* Whate'er his words may be,  
May ye be pleased to hear him in complete  
Dignified silence.

*Ma.* To yourselves erewhile  
Came Tarquin, at the earliest news that Rome  
Rebell'd ; almost defenceless and alone,  
Fully relying on his innocence,  
And on his people's loyalty, he came :  
But armed men repell'd him. Hence he sent me,  
A messenger of peace ; and by my means  
Enquires, what is the crime, whence in your sight  
So guilty, that to-day he's doom'd to lose  
The throne of Rome, once his by your consent ...

*People.* Heard ye ? Incredible audacity !  
Slain is Lucretia, and he asks his crime ?

*Ma.* That was the guilt of Sextius, not his ...

*Tib.* And Sextius also at his father's side  
Erewhile repair'd to Rome : and had they not  
Both been compell'd to save their lives by flight,  
Here had ye seen him now.

*People.* Ah why did ye  
Frustrate their wish to gain access to Rome ?  
Already had we torn their scatter'd limbs  
In thousand thousand pieces.

*Ma.* It is true,  
Sextius was also with his father there :  
But Tarquin, more a monarch than a father,  
Thither enticed his son, to subject him  
To a retributory punishment.

*Bru.* This is an impudent unmanly lie ;  
And robs me utterly of self-controul.  
If, to preserve his throne, the guilty father  
Offer'd to sacrifice his guilty son,  
Should we consent to it ? The murder'd lady  
Hath brought, 'tis true, our sufferance to a crisis ;  
But, without this, is not the haughty father,  
The mother, and the whole opprobrious race  
Of impure Sextius, stain'd with thousand crimes ?  
Servius, that perfect king, and Tullia's father,  
Was by the husband of that Tullia slain :  
Tullia, detested monster ! mounts the throne,  
Trampling beneath her horses feet the corse  
Of her slain father : afterwards their reign  
By bloodshed and oppression was distinguish'd ;  
The senators and citizens destroy'd ;  
And those not murder'd cruelly despoil'd ;  
Dragg'd from the service of magnanimous war,  
(To which alone are Roman heroes born,)  
Vilely to hollow and to pile whole quarries,  
Which will remain eternal monument  
Both of their bondage and of regal pride.  
One after t' other, their so many crimes . . .  
When, when should I conclude my narrative,  
If one by one I should enumerate  
The Tarquins' trespasses ? Lucretia's death  
Was last of these ; and their impiety,  
And our endurance, terminate with this.

*People.* This is the last ; Rome swears it is the last.

*Va.* This we all swear : we all will rather die  
Ere impious Tarquin e'er return to Rome.

*Bru.* Mamilius, well, thou art confused and mute ;  
Thou mightest clearly have foreseen the answer.  
Go then, repeat it to thy lord, since thou  
To being a man, prefer'st to be a slave.

*Ma.* I might urge many arguments ; . . but none . .

*People.* No, no ! there are 'twixt citizens oppress'd  
And a despotic king no arguments,  
Save those which hurtle in the field of Mars.  
Heard he indeed our arguments and prayers  
When on the throne he sat, puff'd up with pride,  
And steel'd with cruelty ? Did he not then  
Laugh at our tears, and scoff at our complaints ?

*Ma.* Then may another king with milder sway  
More satisfy your hearts.—My whole discourse  
I now shall terminate in one request.—  
Tarquin in Rome has left abundant wealth,  
Indisputably his ; would it be just  
That ye, besides his honours, throne, and country,  
Should rob him of his substance ?

*People.* —Answer this,  
Brutus, for us.

*Bru.* His country is not taken  
From Tarquin by the Romans : kings have not  
A country ever ; nor deserve they one :  
They never were, nor are of Roman blood.  
They have themselves defrauded of their honour  
For a long time. Henceforth, by our decree,  
The monarch and the monarchy from Rome  
Are banish'd everlastingly ; the throne

Is, by the flames, consumed to noisome dust ;  
 Nor is a trace remaining of it now.  
 'Tis true in part, that, when they came to Rome,  
 Their foreign innovating ancestors  
 Infamous treasures brought, which, afterwards  
 Insidiously dispersed, at first conduced  
 To vitiate our simple ancient customs.  
 Their wealth was afterwards the fruit of rapine,  
 And was augmented by our sweat and blood ;  
 From whence the Romans equitably might  
 Resume it for themselves. But Rome esteems  
 The Tarquins only worthy to enjoy it,  
 And gives it all to them.

*People.* Oh heart sublime !  
 The tutelary genius of Rome  
 In Brutus speaks. Be his decree fulfill'd . .  
 Let Tarquin have this guilty wealth . . .

*Bru.* With gold  
 May vice and every royal feculence  
 Depart.—Go hence, Mamilius, and collect  
 Their treasures with all possible dispatch :  
 My sons shall be to thee in this thy task,  
 Both guardians and assistants. Go ye with him.

SCENE THE SEVENTH.

*Brutus, People, Valerius, Senators, Patricians.*

*Bru.* Methinks, oh citizens, 'tis now high time  
 The forum to abandon, to repair  
 Arm'd to the camp. Let us, let us behold  
 If Tarquin dare to challenge with his sword  
 Another answer from us.

*People.* Brutus, see  
Thy chosen followers are all accoutred.  
*Br.* Let us then go to victory or death.

## ACT THE THIRD.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Tiberius, Mamilius.*

*Tib.* Mamilius, come, I must obey my father :  
This moment hath he sent to me a message,  
Which peremptorily insists on this :  
Thou with the setting sun must go from hence.

*Ma.* Oh ! how can he presume to abrogate  
That which himself with universal Rome  
Granted to me this morning ? . . .

*Tib.* He alone  
Forbids thy longer tarriance here : ere long  
The hoarded wealth, solicited and granted,  
Shall from the gates pursue thee.—Let us go . . .

*Ma.* Say, in what manner am I authorized  
To greet unhappy Aruns in thy name ?

*Tib.* Tell him, . . . that he alone deserveth not  
To be by birth a Tarquin ; and that I,  
Still mindful of our friendship, feel no small  
Compassion for his fate.—For him I can  
Do nothing . . .

*Ma.* For thyself, thou canst do much.

*Tib.* What dost thou mean ?

*Ma.* That if compassion yet  
Find an admission in thy youthful breast,  
Thou for thyself and for thy friends should'st feel it.

*Tib.* What sayest thou ?

*Ma.* That Aruns' pity, (and soon,)  
More than thine him, may benefit thyself.  
Dangers and obstacles thou seest not,  
Intoxicate with freedom : but canst thou -  
Think that they ever can be permanent,  
These innovating, undigested plans,  
These mere chimeras of a government ?

*Tib.* I easily believe, since thou'rt a slave,  
That freedom seems impossible to thee :  
But the unanimous consent of Rome . . .

*Ma.* Th' authentic wishes of another Rome  
Have I since heard : thou dost excite my pity ;  
Thou who with thy infatuated father  
Dost rush towards the fatal precipice.—  
But Titus comes to join us.—Ah ! perchance,  
Thy brother may himself expose to thee,  
Better than me, the dubious state of things.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Titus, Mamilius, Tiberius.*

*Tit.* I ran in quest of thee ; fain would I speak . .

*Tib.* I cannot hear thee now.

*Ma.* Immediately

He ought to drag me forth from Rome : to this  
His father's absolute command compels him.—  
How much I pity you, oh youths ! . . .

*Tib.* Meanwhile

Let us depart.—I presently return  
To listen to thee, Titus.

*Tit.* And this man,  
What would he say ?

*Ma.* Let us depart : perchance

I may, as we proceed, communicate  
That which thy brother now would tell thee.

*Tit.* Stop.

To learn from thee . . .

*Ma.* More than thou know'st I'll tell thee.  
It all depends on me : I can, I only,  
Deliver you from mighty perils . . .

*Tib.* Thou  
Artfully speak'st . . .

*Tit.* And what depends on thee ?

*Ma.* Tiberius, and Titus, and your Brutus,  
And Collatinus, and e'en Rome herself.

*Tib.* Vain-glorious fool ! what sayest thou ?

*Tit.* I know  
The guilty hope . . .

*Ma.* Hope ! it is certainty.  
Already a confederacy is form'd  
In favour of the Tarquins, and complete :  
Nor are the Aquilii the sole confederates,  
As thou dost think, oh Titus : with these are  
Th' Octavii, the Marcii, and others ;  
Hundreds and hundreds of patrician rank ;  
And many more, consummately esteem'd  
Among the very people . . .

*Tib.* What do I hear ? . . .

*Tit.* 'Tis true, too true in part : there is in Rome  
A spirit of sedition. Numbers met  
In solemn conference where th' Aquilii dwell :  
As friend and relative, I sought their dwelling,  
And from th' assembly was alone excluded.  
A strong suspicion thence arose in me . . .

*Ma.* I was in conference with th' Aquilii,  
While thou wert thus excluded : finally,

So strong, so certain, and so well assured  
Is the confederacy, that I fear not  
To reveal it to you.

*Tib.* Perfidious . . .

*Tit.* There

Hast thou employ'd thy abject arts . . .

*Ma.* Hear, hear,  
Ye sons of Brutus, that which I would say.—  
Had it been my contrivance thus to form  
So quickly such a formidable plot,  
I had not been on this account perfidious.  
For the most just and sanctimonious cause  
Of a legitimate king had I attempted  
To turn to equity and penitence  
His subjects, to their several duties blind,  
Seduced from truth; nor would this too have been  
Perfidious. But I neither ought, nor will,  
Take to myself the honour of a deed  
Which neither cost me labour or design.  
Scarce was the popular conventicle  
Dissolved, ere I clandestinely received  
An invitation to a secret council.  
Here with amazement was I overwhelm'd,  
Such and so many, and such ardent friends  
Of the expell'd, calumniated Tarquins  
To see united: emulously all  
They promised me far more than I from them  
Had ventured to demand. They all agreed  
For Sextius alone to stipulate  
The punishment he merited. And Sextius  
Is culpable; and, e'en more than Rome can be,  
His father is incensed 'gainst him; and swears  
On him an entire vengeance. I made known



To them this resolution of the king :  
Then all with one voice cried, " We will lay down  
Our lives to reinstate him in the throne."  
This of the noblest and best part of Rome,  
This was the cry.—Now ye, see ye not clearly,  
From this account, that artifice is not  
Embosom'd in me ; I reveal the whole  
To save you, and to save at the same time,  
If he consent to it, your sire himself.

*Tib.* Since thou already know'st so much, I deem  
That it were best, till Brutus's return,  
To urge thy stay in Rome. I now perceive  
Why Brutus sent so expeditiously  
The order to expel thee ; but, alas !  
It came to me too late . . .

*Tib.* Thou thinkest justly :  
Meanwhile do thou watch over him with care.  
The most secure asylum in the which  
To place Mamilius, appears to me  
The house of the Vitellii, our cousins.  
I to the camp shall fly, to expedite  
My sire's return from thence.

*Ma.* Since I esteem'd  
Your natures courteous, I have spoken frankly.  
Will it now please ye to betray me ? Do it ;  
Further if it please Brutus to infringe  
The sacred rights of hospitality,  
Let him, in my case, do it ; but already  
So far have matters gone, that benefit,  
In consequence of aught that I may suffer,  
Cannot accrue to Brutus or yourselves.  
Already far beyond what ye suspect  
Is the confederacy advanced. E'en now

Your father and his colleagues, and the dregs  
Of the vile populace alone remain  
The nerve and sinew of rebellion's cause.  
Go to thy father, Titus, if thou wilt :  
The more thou dost accelerate his return,  
So much the more dost thou accelerate  
His evil destiny.—Deposit me  
With the Vitellii quickly ; I shall be  
Far safer in their custody than thou.

*Tib.* What vile suspicion would'st thou thus ? ...

*Ma.* I speak

Not from suspicion, but from certainty.  
E'en the Vitellii, the four faithful brothers  
Of Brutus' consort, of your mother, they,  
As much by amity to Brutus bound  
As by the ties of blood, e'en they desire  
To reinstate Tarquinius on the throne.

*Tit.* Oh heaven ! ...

*Tib.* This is a lie ...

*Ma.* This scroll, in which,

Sign'd by themselves, the most illustrious names  
Of the confederates are at length inscribed,  
Will, without doubt, convince you.—Look at it :  
Beneath the Aquilii's names, now, one by one,  
Read there, their four names written.

*Tib.* Dreadful sight !

*Tit.* Oh heaven ! what will become then of my  
father ? ...

*Tib.* Oh day of sorrow ! Oh devoted Rome !

*Ma.* Nor fondly dream ye, since this scroll I bear,  
That the success of the confederacy  
On my departure hangs. Clandestinely  
Already is a faithful messenger

Of mine from Rome departed ; and to Tarquin  
Already is the project fully known.  
Th' Etrurians to his standard flock in numbers ;  
The powerful king of Cutia takes his part ;  
Tarquinia, Veia, lastly all Etruria,  
All Rome, except the consuls and yourselves.  
This scroll is written with no other purpose  
Than to obtain the clemency of Tarquin  
In favour of the names therein inscribed.  
Surrender me, and with myself this scroll,  
Into your father's hands ; and ye perchance  
May for awhile cause your relations' blood  
To flow in rivers ; but, or soon or late,  
Your father ye condemn to certain death ;  
For, do ye what ye may, Tarquin will be,  
Ere long, inevitably king in Rome.

*Tit.* Ah ! I too clearly did anticipate  
What now I hear. I said it to my father . . .

*Tib.* Alas ! we are driven to a perilous straight !  
What should we do ? Ah ! speak . . .

*Tit.* Peril immense  
Threatens our father . . .

*Tib.* And still greater Rome . . .

*Ma.* Wherefore this secret conference prolong ?  
I am prepared for all, whether ye chuse  
To drag me forth from Rome, or, bound with chains,  
To keep me there a captive : but if love,  
True love for Rome, your father, and yourselves,  
Dwell in your bosom, ye at once will save  
Yourselves, your father, and your native Rome.  
All this is in your power.

*Tit.* How ? . . .

*Tib.* What hop'st thou ?

*Ma.* Add but your names with your own hand to these,

And all will then be safe.

*Tib.* Oh heaven! shall we

Our father and our country thus betray? . . .

*Ma.* Your honour and your tutelary Gods,  
Your father and your country ye betray'd,  
Then when ye dared 'gainst your legitimate king  
Rebelligiously to rise. Yet had your fate  
Granted a happy issue to your scheme,  
Ye had, at least, some recompense obtain'd  
For this your treachery: but since ye see  
That prospect vanish'd, (I again repeat it,)  
With further perseverance you will drag,  
And vainly drag, to dire calamity  
Your country, and your father, and yourselves.

*Tit.* But, tell me, what would be our gain, should we

Annex our names to those already written?

To what do these subscribers pledge themselves?

*Ma.* To things most just. First, from the king's own lips

To hear his own defence; to make yourselves,  
The king being present, judges of the late  
And horrible misdemeanour of his son;  
To see him punish'd; to regenerate  
And reinstate, in splendour and in peace,  
Beneath the sway of less despotic laws,  
Your agitated country . . . Doing this,  
Ah! ye will hear yourselves beyond all others  
Hail'd as the true deliverers of the state;  
Provided that 'twixt Brutus and Tarquinius  
Ye be the instruments of lasting friendship;

The only means now to place Rome in safety.

*Tit.* Assuredly we might do this . . .

*Tib.* Reflect . . .

Who knows ? . . . Perhaps other means . . .

*Tit.* What other means

Remain for us now ? The confederacy

Too powerful is . . .

*Tib.* I'm younger than thyself ;

In so important a concern I will not,

Nor can I, part myself from thee : too much

I've always loved thee : but I feel at heart

A horrible presage . . .

*Tit.* But the night approaches,

Yet neither Collatinus nor my father

Do I behold with their arm'd men return

To Rome : his messenger already is

To Tarquin gone ; we are on all sides press'd ;

At least it now behoves us for the present

To appease the king . . .

*Ma.* The hour is late ; resolve :

'Tis vain this whispering apart from me.

Whether for my advantage ye decide

T' exert yourselves, or (with more truth) for yours,

The swiftest now will be the best decision.

Resolve ; behold the scroll. Rich with your names,

Ye'll make me speedily depart from Rome,

That peace to Rome may speedily return.

*Tit.* Heaven I attest ; it seeth my pure heart ;

It knows that nothing but the good of others

To this compels me . . .

*Tib.* Heaven ! what art thou doing ? . . .

*Tit.* Behold my name.

*Tib.* —And be it, if thou wilt.—

Behold my own name, oh Mamilius, sign'd.

*Ma.* I go contented.

*Tit.* Do thou then conduct him ;  
While I . . .

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Lictors, Collatinus with a number of Soldiers, Titus, Mamilius, Tiberius:*

*Col.* What do I see ? Mamilius yet  
In Rome ?

*Tib.* Oh heaven ! . . .

*Tit.* Oh inauspicious meeting !

*Col.* And ye, have ye thus kept the absolute  
And peremptory order of your father ?  
But wherefore are ye agitated thus ?  
Wherefore thus mute ?—Ah, heaven be praised !  
perchance

I yet arrive in time.—Lictors, advance ;  
Be Titus and Tiberius instantly  
In fetters bound . . .

*Tit.* Ah, hear us ! . . .

*Col.* Rome, ere long,  
Shall hear you, and the consul Brutus. Drag  
To their paternal dwelling the two brothers ;  
And watch them there.

*Tib.* Ah Titus !

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Collatinus, Mamilius, Soldiers.*

*Col.* (*To the Soldiers.*) And do you  
Escort Mamilius through the gates . . .

*Ma.* I came  
Under the public faith.

*Col.* Inviolatè,  
Under the public faith, which thou deservest not,  
Thou shalt depart from hence.—Thou hearest, *Quintus*.

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Collatinus.*

Merciful heaven! when shall it have an end,  
This quick succession of calamities? . . .  
But I'm compell'd meanwhile, till Brutus come,  
To watch o'er all things with an iron heart.

## ACT THE FOURTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Lictors, Brutus, Soldiers.*

*Bru.* Heroic Romans! we have combated  
Enough to-day for Rome. Let every man,  
For the remaining hours of the half-spent night,  
To his own family repair in peace.  
Should the foe once more have the hardihood  
To turn their faces to the gates of Rome,  
We to disperse them will again unite.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Collatinus, Brutus, Lictors, Soldiers.*

*Col.* Oh Brutus, opportunely thou returnest.  
Already, anxious at thy non-appearance,  
I quitted Rome to accelerate our meeting.

*Bru.* I return late, but full of hope and joy.  
I found it difficult within the walls  
My heroes to collect ; they closely press'd  
A royal company in fierce attack,  
Which, at first sight, made some display of valour.  
In Tarquin's track from Ardea they came ;  
Nor did they know that he had been driven back :  
Perhaps in his flight, by chance or by design,  
He varied from his former course. This troop  
We opportunely met ; they were already  
Broken and scatter'd all, in numbers slain,  
And the rest routed, ere the sun declined.  
I scarcely afterwards restrain'd my men  
Further, when night fell, from pursuing them.

*Col.* I also in my sally from the walls  
Met with no mean success. I first, thou knowest,  
Through th' other gate descended to the plain :  
Troop after troop, it was my fate to meet  
Our home-returning and disbanded army,  
Almost to the last man ; they had in Ardea  
Seceded from the standard of the tyrant.  
Oh ! what exulting and unbounded cries  
Of purest transport did the citizens  
And soldiers raise to heaven, when thus they met ! . .  
By me conducted, in the walls of Rome  
Are they assembled now ; and there they watch  
With emulous vigilance in her defence.

*Bru.* Treacherous Mamilius certainly was banish'd  
As I my sons commanded ? Let us all  
Then go to brief repose ; we have, methinks,  
Well purchased the indulgence. In the forum  
To-morrow's dawn shall see us ; for we ought  
There, with the people, to confer at length



On things of loftiest consequence.

*Col.* —Oh Brutus! . . .

Yet stay a little while.—Command thy troops,  
Yet keeping under arms, to draw aside :  
I ought to speak with thee in private here.

*Bru.* Ah, wherefore ? . . .

*Col.* The interests of Rome require it ;  
I pray thee grant me this . . .

*Bru.* In double troop,  
At the entrance of the forum, wait for me,  
Oh soldiers.—Lictors, draw aside a little.

*Col.* —Ah Brutus! . . . Thou wilt vainly, vainly  
seek,

Amid thy Lares, in this horrible night,  
Even a transient rest.

*Bru.* What would'st thou tell me ? . . .

Whence art thou troubled, anxious, trembling thus ?

*Col.* Yes, I indeed tremble for Brutus, Rome,  
And all of us.—This morning thou, oh Brutus,  
Didst, with compassionate hand, to my profound  
And recent wound a “ flattering unction ” lay  
Of vengeance and of hope : and I, alas !

Am forced to give thee, as a recompence,  
To give thee in thy heart a wound more fatal.

Why have I lived till now ? . . . Oh desolate,  
Distracted father ! Thou art now compell'd,  
From a disconsolate and widow'd husband  
Tidings to hear, which in thy heart will fix  
A mortal wound ! . . . Yet neither can I hide them,  
Nor yet to thee delay their utterance.

*Bru.* Alas ! . . I shudder at thy words . . . But yet  
Worse than the evil is its expectation.  
Speak. I that hitherto in servitude

Have dragg'd a painful life, have long been used  
To tremble always for my dearest treasures.  
Private calamities, whate'er they be,  
So that the liberties of Rome be safe,  
I can endure to hear : speak.

*Col.* On thyself,  
(But too emphatically,) on thyself  
The liberties of Rome are now dependent ;  
But at a price so vast that I almost . . .  
Oh dreadful day ! . . . I was the first that gave  
Occasion for the lofty enterprize,  
By a hard sacrifice ; but to conclude it . . .  
Oh heaven ! . . . 'tis indispensable that Brutus  
Prepare to manifest to assembled Rome  
A cruel, fierce, unparallel'd example  
Of desperate fortitude.—Amid thy Lares,  
(Would'st thou believe it ?) thou liv'st not in safety.  
A powerful, numerous, fierce conspiracy  
In Rome now rages.

*Bru.* I suspected it,  
In hearing of the strenuous cabals  
Of insincere Mamilius ; and in haste  
I expedited to Tiberius hence  
An express order, ere the hour of three,  
T' expel him from the city.

*Col.* When the sun  
Was sinking in the barriers of the west,  
I found Mamilius still had linger'd here  
With both thy sons.—It grieves me to repeat it ;  
But it is too true ; thou wert ill obey'd.

*Bru.* Oh what a conflict dost thou raise in me  
Of fear and indignation ! . . .

*Col.* Wretched Brutus ! . . .

What wilt thou feel when the conspiracy  
To thee I publish? . . . and when thou shalt hear  
The names of the conspirators? . . . Then, first,  
Among a number of thy nearest friends  
And relatives, first the Vitellii are  
A part and instigators of the plot . . .

*Bru.* Alas! the brothers of my wife!

*Col.* Who knows

If also she be not seduced by them?

And, . . . then . . . thy sons . . . themselves! . . .

*Bru.* What do I hear? . . .

Oh heaven! my blood freezes in every vein! . . .

My sons conspirators! . . . It cannot be! . . .

*Col.* Oh Brutus . . . that it were not so!—And I,

At first, would not believe it: afterwards

My eyes compell'd me to implicit faith.—

This is a paper fatal to our peace:

Read it.

*Bru.* . . . My tremulous heart is chill'd with fear.

What do I here behold? . . . Name after name,

With their own hand inscribed; the Aquilii first,

Then the Vitellii, and the Martii;

And others after others; . . . and, at last, . . .

Titus, Tiberius! . . . Ah! this is enough . . .

No more; . . . I've seen too much.—Unhappy Brutus!

Thou art no more a father . . . —But, thou'rt yet

Consul, no less than citizen of Rome.—

Titus, ho, Titus, and Tiberius, quick,

Let them be brought before me.

*Col.* Ah! oh Brutus,

It had been better hadst thou suffer'd me

To die alone . . .

*Bru.* How fell into thy hands

This terrible paper ?

*Col.* I myself beheld it,  
Though swiftly he conceal'd it, in the hands  
Of the infamous Mamilius I beheld it ;  
Thence I, in his expulsion from the city,  
Constrain'd him to surrender it. Meanwhile,  
In thy own dwelling, to a faithful guard,  
Thy sons had I committed ; in an instant  
'Gainst every accident I had provided.  
And now, I hope, that all these machinations  
Will be completely baffled. Luckily  
I was informed of them in time ; and Jove,  
In his compassion, certainly ordain'd  
That such a horrible mystery to me,  
Me, not a father, should be first divulged.  
I tell this to thee trembling and with tears.  
But yet 'tis fit that I reveal it to thee  
Ere to thy dwelling thou . . .

*Bru.* No other dwelling  
Except the forum and the tomb, remains  
For wretched Brutus.—'Tis my duty now  
To give, ere death to Brutus, life to Rome.

*Col.* My heart thou rendest. Thy excessive grief  
Makes me almost insensible to mine . . .  
But, who can tell ? . . . Perchance thy sons, e'en yet,  
May exculpate themselves . . . Hear them thyself . . .  
I have not yet of this conspiracy  
Spoken to any one except thyself :  
I will adopt the most effectual measures  
That no man, during this approaching night,  
Shall even quit his dwelling : all the people  
I have by day-break summon'd to the forum.

*Bru.* And all the people, by to-morrow's dawn,

The real truth, whate'er that truth may be,  
Shall from my lips receive.

*Col.* I hear, methinks,  
The steps of the unhappy youths . . .

*Bru.* My sons! . . .  
Such I this morning deem'd them; foes to me  
They're now become, and traitors to their country . .

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Titus, Tiberius, among Lictors, Brutus, Collatinus.*

*Bru.* Let every man retire: do ye alone  
Advance.

*Tit.* Ah father! . . .

*Bru.* I of Rome am consul.—  
I ask of you if ye are citizens  
Of Rome.

*Tib.* We are; and sons of Brutus yet . . .

*Tit.* And we will prove it, if the consul deign  
To hear us.

*Col.* At their gestures, at their words,  
I feel my heart transpierced.

*Bru.* —This is a scroll,  
Which the perfidious Mamilius bore  
To the proscribed Tarquinius. In that paper,  
With many other names, are yours inscribed.  
Ye to your country then are traitors; now  
No more the sons of Brutus, but the sons  
Of infamous expatriated tyrants.

*Tit.* 'Tis true, (too true,) that I first added there  
'Neath many other noble names, my name,  
And his my brother afterwards inscribed,  
By my example urged. He is not guilty:

Be it whate'er it may, the penalty  
To me alone is due. He evermore  
Dissuaded me . . .

*Tib.* Yet I, perplex'd, confounded,  
Knew not what other council to propose :  
And it seem'd indispensable to us  
To save, at all events, our sire betray'd.  
Mamilius had so artfully perplex'd  
Falsehood and truth, that we, caught by his arts,  
Deeming our father by all men abandon'd,  
Were inadvertently ourselves constrain'd  
Thus to betray him, by our too great love.  
Ah ! if we're criminal, alike have we  
Incurr'd the punishment annex'd to guilt :  
But the sole punishment we apprehend,  
The sole insufferable punishment,  
(Paternal hatred,) we call heaven to witness,  
And swear that neither of us merit this.

*Bru.* Oh infamy ! and have ye promised then  
To reinstate, with these confederate traitors,  
The banish'd tyrant ?

*Tit.* By my signature  
I hoped t' appease that tyrant towards my father . . .

*Bru.* To Brutus ! Tarquin be appeased towards  
Brutus !—

And even were it thus, perfidious youth !  
Should'st thou betray thy country e'en for me ?  
Did ye not both erewhile, both swear with me,  
Rather to die than ever to submit,  
Let him be who he may, to any king ?

*Tit.* This I deny not, no . . .

*Bru.* Then ye are both  
Perjured and traitors ! . . . In this paper ye

Have sign'd at once your own death . . . and your father's! . . .

*Tib.* Thou weepst, father! . . . If paternal tears,  
Moistening the stern eyes of the rigid judge,  
Attest at least that altogether we  
Are not unworthy of thy tenderness,  
We die exulting for the sake of Rome.

*Tit.* But, though mistaken, Titus neither was  
Or vile or criminal . . .

*Bru.* Oh sons! oh sons! . . .

—Why do I call ye sons? Ye are my first,  
Ye are my sole dishonour. At the expense  
Both of his glory and his liberty,  
Ye, ye would purchase for your wretched father  
A despicable life! Ye would reduce me  
To pine with you in double slavery,  
Then when 'twas in your power to go with  
Free and unshackled, to a generous death!  
And to achieve an enterprize so base,  
Ye became traitors to your nascent country!  
To honour deaf, and perjured to the Gods!—  
And let me grant that I had been to-day  
Deserted and betray'd by every Roman;  
That, following your example, I had stoop'd  
The pity of the tyrant to implore;  
Ah fools! yet more, far more than guilty fools!  
Could you e'er think that the ferocious heart  
Of an expell'd, exasperated tyrant,  
Could aught imbibe except a raging thirst  
For bloodshed and revenge? To certain death,  
To an opprobrious and lingering death,  
Did ye, to save him, now reserve your father!

*Tit.* Fear, I confess, in reading in that scroll

So many, and so many potent names,  
My breast invaded, and made me esteem  
The lofty enterprize impossible.  
Already, as thou knowest, (although my heart  
Wish'd its success,) I thought it difficult,  
And in itself both perilous and doubtful :  
Hence, when I saw the aspect of events  
In such a short space absolutely change ;  
Saw to the king the citizens return,  
And those the most illustrious, in a crowd ;  
I fear'd for Rome, where much blood, and in vain,  
And first of all thy blood, was doom'd to run.  
A hope sprung in my heart, that, if our names  
Were added to the names already written,  
Thus, by our means, our father might at least  
Be rescued from the vengeance of the king :  
And this to us Mamilius craftily  
Promised in many words.

*Bru.* What hast thou done ?

What hast thou done ? Oh heaven ! Ah, at that time  
Thou wert a citizen of Rome no longer ;  
Since thou for me betrayedst Rome . . . Nor then  
Wert thou a son of Brutus, since his honour  
Thou soldest at the price of servitude.

*Tib.* Ah father, do not wreak on him alone  
Thy just disdain ; I equally deserve it.  
I also fear'd for thee, I must confess it ;  
We loved our father better than our country :  
Yes, father, this alone was our offence.

*Col.* Ah wretched youths ! . . Ah wretched father !

*Bru.* Yes,

Ye were indeed more than the sons of Rome,  
The sons of Brutus ! Brought up as ye were



In abject slavery, I indeed constrain'd  
From the complexion of the times to cheat you ;  
With lofty and invigorating thoughts  
I could not foster you as it behoved  
A citizen and parent . . . Oh my sons,  
I for your error seek no other cause.  
Myself, myself alone I blame for this,  
My silence and my pristine servitude ;  
And, though assumed, my very fear itself,  
Which taught you also to be apprehensive.  
Ah ! pity in my bosom is not mute ; . . .  
But, in a more authoritative voice,  
Tremendous justice to my conscience cries ;  
And Rome now rightfully lays claim to it.—  
My sons, beloved sons, I am, alas !  
More wretched far than you . . . Ah why, oh heaven !  
Since in your free arbitrement it lay  
Rome to betray, or doom your sire to death,  
Wherefore did ye forget that to avert  
From Brutus infamy (his only death)  
A sword was all sufficient ? And he had one ;  
This his sons knew ; and how, when they knew this,  
Could they one moment tremble for their father ?

*Col.* Ah ! for awhile, oh Brutus, somewhat calm  
Thy grief and indignation ; yet who knows . . .  
To save them perhaps . . .

*Tit.* Ah ! ye would wish in vain  
To save me now : I could no longer live !  
I've lost my sire's esteem, perhaps his love . . .  
No, 'tis not possible for me to live.  
But let my sad example exculpate  
My innocent, younger brother ; save him, father . . .

*Tib.* Immense, oh father, is our guilt. But we

Alike are guilty ; and thou wert not just,  
If thou on us an equal punishment  
Inflictest not. Perchance expressly now  
The tutelary genius of Rome  
Decrees to liberty a lasting basis  
In our severe example.

*Bru.* On my sons ! . . .

Ah ! let this now suffice. Your excellent,  
Sublime, immortalizing penitence  
Tears as by piecemeal my distracted heart . . .  
Alas ! e'en yet I am, e'en yet a father  
More than a consul . . . Through my every vein  
I feel a horrid chillness creep . . . Ah all,  
Yes, all my blood will, for my country's sake,  
Ere long be shed . . . To re-establish Rome  
The last blood indispensable is mine :  
Provided that I enfranchise my country,  
I swear, oh sons, that I will not one day  
Survive your loss.—Let me for the last time,  
Beloved children, clasp you to my breast ; . . .  
Yet I can do it . . . Tears, alas ! forbid . . .  
My further utterance . . . Much-loved sons, farewell.  
Consul of Rome, to thee do I restore  
The fatal tablet. An imperious duty  
Wills, that to-morrow, without subterfuge,  
It be presented to assembled Rome.  
Meanwhile the guilty to thy custody  
Are all committed. I will also come,  
At early dawn, to meet thee in the forum.  
I cannot longer now endure the presence  
Of such an agonizing spectacle.

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Collatinus, Titus, Tiberius, Lictors.*

*Col.* Fatal necessity !

*Tit.* Unhappy father !

*Tib.* Provided Rome be saved . . .

*Col.* All follow me.

## ACT THE FIFTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*People, Valerius, Senators, Patricians, all seated.  
Collatinus and Brutus in the Rostrum.*

*Col.* Romans, to you the sun of yesterday  
Triumphantly and joyfully arose ;  
When, at this hour exactly, from yourselves  
The earliest cries of liberty resounded  
Through the wide air : I, in my grief absorb'd,  
Meanwhile stood mute. But on this horrible day  
A part quite different, alas ! on me  
Devolves by lot, since, with the noble Brutus,  
Ye have been pleased t' elect me for your consul.—  
All swore, (I hope ye recollect it well,)  
All of ye, in the forum, yesterday,  
Swore to the gods, that, sooner than return  
To the vile yoke of monarchs, ye would die.  
And not alone the execrable Tarquins,  
But every man that dared to make himself  
Superior to the laws, by this your oath  
Expressly was proscribed.—Would ye believe it ?  
I, in your presence, I am now constrain'd,  
'Mong the most powerful noble citizens,

To impeach many, infamous and perjured,  
 Who have, 'gainst Rome and 'gainst themselves,  
 (too much so!)  
 Been plotting for the Tarquins.

*People.* For the Tarquins!  
 Who are they? Who are the flagitious traitors,  
 Unworthy to be Romans? Quickly, name them;  
 We will, they all be slain...

*Col.* Ah!...who can tell...  
 Perhaps...when ye hear the names?...When I attempt

To utter them, I tremble...And far more  
 Shall I implore from you your clemency  
 Than your stern justice. Almost all of these  
 Are youths: they have not, from their unripe age,  
 Yet felt the ills, so countless and so bitter,  
 Of civil servitude: the greater part,  
 Enervated by indolence, brought up  
 In a corrupted court's pestiferous shade,  
 Have only tasted tyranny's sweet bait,  
 Yet unacquainted with the lurking poison.

*People.* Whoe'er they be indeed, they're traitors,  
 perjured;  
 Compassion they deserve not; let them perish:  
 The corrupt, putrid, vitiating members  
 Of a new city, liberty decrees  
 That they be first lopp'd off.—Pronounce their names.

*Va.* And we, although too thoroughly convinced  
 That this disgrace (their permanent dishonour)  
 To the patrician tribe belongs, yet now  
 We with the people emulously seek  
 To know the culprits' names.—Oh noble people!  
 For high achievements born! Oh happy ye!

Ye only did sustain the tyrant's yoke ;  
But to the coveted impediment  
Of fetters well deserved, in us were join'd,  
Debased patricians ! their disgrace and shame.  
We, nearer to the tyrant, more enslaved,  
And less regretting slavery than you ;  
We thence assuredly more worthy slavery :  
I feel the presage ; yes, we, we have been  
The first in perjury.—Oh Collatinus,  
I ask it of thee, whosoe'er they be,  
Divulge the criminals. What terrible,  
What inextinguishable thirst of honour  
Pervades her citizens, Rome should to-day  
Acknowledge from a memorable proof.

*People.* Oh worthy ye of better fate ! . . May heaven  
Grant, that the few to servitude seduced,  
Either plebeian or patrician names  
No longer bear ! The trait'rous and the perjured  
Cease to be Romans.

*Col.* Many are the guilty ;  
But different their degrees of guilt. There are  
Among them those who servitude abhor,  
And who have elevated courteous hearts ;  
But in a thousand ways assail'd, entrapp'd,  
By base Mamilius . . .

*People.* Where is the impostor ?  
Oh rage ! where is he ? . . .

*Col.* Ere the night was closed,  
From Rome I banish'd him ; the sacred rights  
Of hospitality required his safety,  
Though he were culpable. Religiously  
The citizens of Rome each right observe ;

Faith is the basis of our sacred freedom.

*People.* In truth thou hast done well from our first  
rage

To wrest him : justice thus is not by us  
Attainted. We shall have, in fair array,  
The gods themselves and virtue with us listed :  
But round the banners of the heart-struck tyrants  
Treason, dissimulation, abject fear,  
The appalling ministers of heavenly vengeance,  
Eternally shall lour . . .

*Va.* But shall we give them,  
That so they may avail themselves of it  
To injure Rome, their vitiating wealth ?  
Far more than steel, gold in the tyrant's hands  
We've reason now to deprecate.

*People.* 'Tis true ;  
We will not to their baseness lend such arms :  
But hence shall we another's make our own ?  
What boots to us, who in our hands have swords,  
And at our breasts a mail of liberty,  
What boots to us the ministry of gold ?

*Va.* Let it be burn'd ; let all the tyrant's wealth  
Be burn'd, or to the Tyber's whelming waves  
Committed.

*People.* And with these eternally  
May their remembrance perish . . .

*Va.* Likewise perish  
All recollection of our servitude.

*Col.* Magnanimous, and worthy of yourselves,  
Is the decision ; your decree in this  
Shall quickly be fulfill'd.

*People.* Yes ; but meanwhile  
The names of the conspirators divulge,

And the conspiracy.

*Col.* ... Oh heaven! ... I tremble  
In undertaking such a cruel office ...

*People.* And Brutus stands immoveable and silent.  
He seems to have his eyes suffused with tears,  
Though shedding none, and fierce his downcast looks  
He fixes on the earth.—Oh Collatinus,  
Do thou then quickly speak.

*Col.* ... Oh heaven! ...

*Va.* But what  
Then ails thee? The deliverer of Rome,  
The husband of Lucretia, and our consul,  
Art thou not, Collatinus? Canst thou be  
The traitors' friend? And canst thou feel compassion  
Towards those who for their country felt it not?

*Col.* —When you shall hear me speak, those very  
pangs  
Which tear my heart and paralyze my tongue  
Will speedily assail you: weeping, mute,  
Alarm'd, with pity and amazement stricken,  
Already I behold you—To the king  
Mamilius went the bearer of this scroll:  
I caused it to be taken from his hands,  
Ere he from Rome departed: and the traitor  
Confess'd, affrighted, that the citizens  
Herein inscribed had sworn, the following night  
To open to the king the gates of Rome.

*People.* Oh treason! Let the guilty perish ...

*Va.* Death  
Were a light punishment for such a crime.

*Col.* The fatal paper let Valerius read  
To you assembled. See it; take it: ... I  
Cannot pronounce these names.

*Va.* What do I see? . . .

Oh execrable list! . . . With his own hand  
Each one his name has written? . . . Romans, hear.—  
Aquilus the sire, and his six sons,  
Head the conspiracy; they first are written.  
Oh heaven! . . .

*Col.* To each of them, the paper shewn,  
They all confess'd it. They are now in chains;  
And ye will see them dragg'd, ere long, before you.

*Va.* . . . Alas! . . . There follow . . .

*People.* Who does follow? Speak.

*Va.* . . . Alas! . . . It is incredible. I read : . .

Four names . . .

*People.* Whose names? Proceed . . .

*Va.* They were the brothers  
Of Brutus' consort . . .

*People.* The Vitellii?

*Col.* Ah! . . .

Soon will ye hear far other names than these.  
—And in your presence, one by one, ere long . . .

*Va.* What boots it then, that one by one I name  
them?

Marcii, Octavii, Fabii, I read,  
And many, many more, alas!—The last  
Make e'en my hair to stand on end with horror . . .  
Yes . . . from my hands . . . at such a sight as this . . .  
The paper falls . . .

*People.* Who can they be?

*Va.* Oh heaven! . . .

Ye . . . never will believe . . .

(UNIVERSAL SILENCE.)

*Bru.* —The names last written,  
Are Titus and Tiberius.



*People.* Thy sons!...

Unhappy father! Inauspicious day!...

*Bru.* Oh day, to you suspicious! Brutus knows  
No other sons but Roman citizens;  
And these are such no longer. Yesterday  
I swore for Rome's sake to shed all my blood:  
This oath I'm ready, and at every risk,  
To-day to consummate...

*People.* Ah wretched father!

(UNIVERSAL SILENCE.)

*Bru.* —But what, with horror stupified, and dumb,  
Do I see universal Rome? For Brutus  
Does every individual tremble here?—  
But say, whom does the fiercest peril menace,  
Brutus or Rome? Each man that hears my voice  
Wills beyond all things, or he ought to will,  
To make his country free, secure, and great;  
Whate'er the consequence he ought to will it.  
Chains are in store for us, and cruel slaughter;  
For Rome her consul trembles; hence her people  
Cannot now tremble for a single father.  
The soft affections, and the gush of tears,  
(That in the forum from a Roman eye  
Can never start, save when they're shed for Rome,)  
The soft affections and the gush of tears,  
In the profound recesses of our hearts  
Are now suppress'd.—I first should shew to you  
(Thus destiny ordains) what permanent  
And lofty base 'tis indispensable  
For us to give to an eternal city.—  
Lictors, advance; and let the criminals  
Be quickly dragg'd in chains into the forum.—  
Now thou'rt the only, the true king of Rome,

People of Mars. Thy majesty by these  
Hath been offended ; signal punishment  
Is now their due ; and the avenging thee  
Devolves upon the consuls . . .<sup>1</sup>

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Brutus and Collatinus in the Rostrum. Valerius,  
People, Senators, Patricians. The Conspirators  
all in Chains among the Lictors ; the last of these  
Titus and Tiberius.*

*People.* Ah ! how many,  
How many may the traitors be ? . . . Oh heaven !  
Behold the sons of Brutus ! . . .

*Col.* Ah ! I cannot  
Longer restrain my tears . . .

*Bru.* — A great day,  
A noble day is this, and evermore  
Will be a memorable one for Rome.—  
Oh ye, perfidiously base, who dared  
Your scarce-awaken'd country to betray,  
Behold ye all before assembled Rome.  
Let each of you, if it be possible,  
Defend himself before her.—All are silent.—  
Rome and the consuls ask of you yourselves,  
Whether to you, convicted criminals,  
The punishment of death be due ?—

(UNIVERSAL SILENCE.)

*Bru.* — To death

---

<sup>1</sup> Brutus is silent in seeing the lictors return with the conspirators.

Then all of you are equitably sentenced.  
The people's majesty, with one consent,  
Pronounces th' irreversible decree.  
Why should we longer tarry?—Oh! my colleague  
Weeps, and is silent. . . . Silent is the senate . . .  
Silent the citizens.

*People.* Oh fatal moment! . . .

Yet just and necessary is their death.

*Tit.* One innocent alone, amongst us all,  
Now dies; and this is he.

*People.* Oh pity! See,  
He of his brother speaks.

*Tib.* Believe him not:  
Or we are both equally innocent,  
Or equally transgressors. In the paper  
My name is written next to his.

*Bru.* No one

Whose name is written in that fatal scroll  
Can be call'd innocent. Some may, perchance,  
Have been less culpable in their intent,  
But only to the gods the intent is known;  
And it would be an arbitrary judgment,  
And thence unjust, the guilty to absolve,  
As to condemn them from the inference  
Drawn from profess'd intention. It would be  
A spurious judgment, such as kings assume;  
Not such as by a just and simple people  
Is held in reverence: people who alone  
To the tremendous sacred laws submit;  
And who, save of the letter of those laws,  
In their decrees, of nought avail themselves.

*Col.* . . . Romans, 'tis true, that these unhappy  
youths

Were with the rest of the conspirators  
Involved ; but that they were solicited,  
Confounded, tamper'd with, and finally,  
By the iniquitous Mamilius  
In an inextricable snare entrapp'd,  
Is also as indubitably true.  
He made them think that all was in the power  
Of the expell'd Tarquinius : thence their names  
(Would you believe it ?) also they subscribed  
Only to save their sire from death . . .

*People.* Oh heaven ! . . .

And is this true indeed ? We should then save  
These two alone . . .

*Bru.* Alas ! what do I hear ? . . .

Is this the people's voice ? Just, free, and strong,  
Ye now would make yourselves, and how ? would ye  
Lay, as the base of such an edifice,  
A partial application of your laws ?  
That I, a father, might not weep, would ye  
Now make so many other citizens,  
Sons, brothers, fathers, weep ? To the keen axe,  
Which they have merited, shall now so many,  
So many others yield their passive necks,  
And shall two culprits only be exempt  
From this, because they seem not what they are ?  
They were the consul's sons, although in deeds  
They were not so : 'mong the conspirators  
With their own hand were they enroll'd : or all  
Or none of them should die. Absolve them all,  
And at once ruin Rome ; save two alone,  
And if it seem so, it would be unjust.  
Now, less a just than a compassionate judge,  
Hath Collatinus these two youths defended,

Asserting, that they wish'd to save their father ;  
 Perhaps this was true ; but perhaps the others wish'd,  
 Their fathers some, their brothers some, and some  
 Their sons to save ; and not on this account  
 Are they less guilty, since they rather chose  
 To sacrifice their country than their friends.  
 The father in his heart may weep for this ;  
 But in the first place should the genuine consul  
 Secure the safety of his native country . . .  
 And afterwards, by mighty grief o'erwhelm'd,  
 Fall on the bodies of his lifeless sons.—  
 Ye will behold, ere many hours are past,  
 To what excess of danger, by these men,  
 Ye have been brought : to fortify our hearts  
 In strength imparted by the strength of others,  
 In individual strength to make us strong,  
 Inflexible as champions of freedom,  
 Cruel, though just, 'tis indispensable  
 That we abide this memorable test.—  
 Depart, oh lictors ; be the culprits all  
 Bound to the columns ; let the hatchet fall  
 Upon them.—I have not a heart of steel . . .  
<sup>1</sup> Ah ! Collatinus, this is the time for thee  
 To pity me : perform for me the rest.<sup>2</sup>

*People.* Oh cruel sight ! . . . The wretched father  
 dare  
 Not look at them . . . And yet, their death is just.

---

<sup>1</sup> Brutus sinks on his seat, and turns his eyes from the spectacle.

<sup>2</sup> Collatinus sees the conspirators disposed in order, and bound to the columns.

*Bru.* —The punishment approaches.—The delinquents

Have heard the sentence of the consuls . . . Now  
Think on the pangs of the distracted father . . .  
The cleaving hatchet o'er each neck impends . . .  
Oh heaven ! my very heart is rent in twain ! . . .  
I with my mantle am constrain'd to hide  
Th' insufferable sight ! . . . This may, at least,  
Be granted to the father . . .

But ye, fix ye on them your eyes : now Rome  
Free and eternal rises from that blood.

*Col.* Oh superhuman strength ! . . .

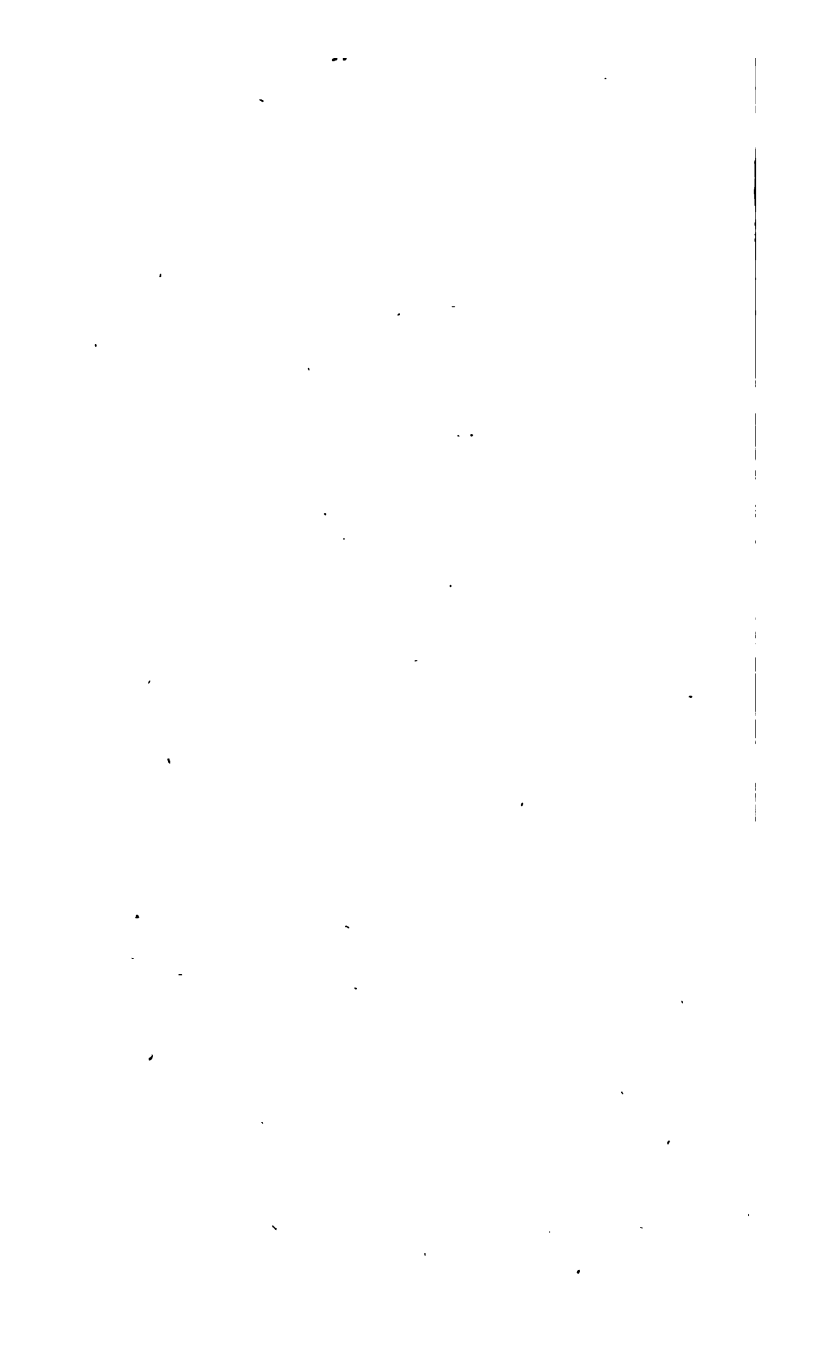
*Va.* Of Rome is Brutus  
The father and the god . . .

*People.* Yes, Brutus is  
The father and the god of Rome . . .

*Bru.* I am  
The most unhappy man that ever lived. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The curtain falls, while the lictors stand ready to strike the conspirators.



# SONNET.

TO

THE NOBLE LADY

THE COUNTESS LOUISA STOLBERG

OF ALBANY.

---

Sometimes regretting that thy gentle name  
Is yet suppress'd by me, in front of these  
To thee too oft repeated tragedies,  
Whence I of folly p'rhaps shall reap the blame ;  
Now would I grace with thee the one whose frame  
The least displeases thee ; though all my ease,  
Though all the pleasure which gave power to please,  
From thee, sole source of inspiration, came.  
The at once innocent and horrid love  
Of the unhappy maid from Cinyras sprung,  
Always caused tears from thy bright eyes to flow ;  
These tears imperiously my bosom move  
To consecrate to thee, (who heard'st it sung  
With sympathetic feeling,) Myrrha's woe.



# MYRRHA.

## A TRAGEDY.

---

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CINYRAS.

EURYCLEA.

CECRIS.

*Chorus.*

MYRRHA.

*Priests.*

PEREUS.

*People.*

---

SCENE,—The Palace in Cyprus.

---

### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cecris, Euryclea.*

*Ce.* Come, faithful Euryclea: now the dawn  
Scarce glimmers; and to me so soon as this  
My royal consort is not wont to come.  
Now thou canst tell me all that thou dost know  
Of our afflicted daughter: even now  
Thy troubled countenance and half-stifled sighs  
Announce to me...

*Eu.* Oh queen!... Unhappy Myrrha  
Drags on a life far worse than any death.  
I dare not to the monarch represent  
Her horrible state: the troubles of a maid  
Ill could a father understand; thou canst,

**A mother.** Hence to thee I come ; and pray  
That thou wilt hear me.

*Ce.* It is true, that I  
For a long time have seen the lustre languish  
Of her rare beauty : obstinate and mute,  
A mortal melancholy dims in her  
That fascinating look : and, could she weep ! . . .  
But before me she's silent ; evermore  
Her eyes are, with tears never shed, suffused.  
In vain do I embrace her ; and in vain  
Request, entreat her, to divulge her grief ;  
Her grief she contradicts ; while day by day  
I see her by that grief consumed.

*Eu.* A daughter  
To you she is by blood, to me by love ;  
Thou that I brought her up know'st well : and I  
Exist in her alone ; and almost half  
Of the fourth lustre is already spent  
Since every day I've clasp'd her to my breast  
In my fond arms . . . And now, can it be true,  
That towards me, to whom she was accustom'd  
From earliest childhood to speak all her thoughts,  
E'en towards me she now appears reserved ?  
And if I speak to her of her distress,  
To me too she denies it, and insists,  
And seems displeased with me . . . But yet she oft,  
Spite of herself, bursts into tears before me.

*Ce.* Such vehement sadness, in so young a heart,  
At first I deem'd to be the consequence  
Of the irresolution which she felt  
In the oft-urged selection of a consort.  
The most illustrious, powerful potentates  
Of Greece and Asia, all in rivalry

From the wide-spreading rumour of her beauty,  
To Cyprus flock'd : and, as respected us,  
She was the perfect mistress of her choice.  
These various impulses, unknown, discordant,  
Might in a youthful bosom well excite  
No slight disturbance. She his valour praised  
In one ; his courteous manners in another ;  
This was endow'd with ampler territories ;  
In that were majesty and comeliness  
Blended consummately ; and he who caught  
Her eyes the most, she fear'd the least perchance  
Might gratify her father. Thoroughly  
I, as a mother and a woman, know  
What conflicts, in the young unpractised heart  
Of a timid virgin, might be well excited  
By such incertitude. But when by Perens,  
Heir of Epirus, every doubt seem'd banish'd ;  
To whom for power, nobility, and youth,  
Valour, and comeliness, and sense, no one  
Could be compared ; then, when the lofty choice  
Of Myrrha gain'd the sanction of her parents ;  
When she, on this account, ought to exult  
With self-congratulation, we behold  
The storm more furiously arise in her,  
And more insufferable agonies  
Consume her every day . . . At such a sight  
I feel my heart as if asunder torn.

*Eu.* Ah, had she never made that fatal choice !  
From that day forth her anguish has increased :  
This very night, the last one that precedes  
Her lofty nuptial rites, (oh heaven ! ) I fear'd  
That it had been to her the last of life !—  
Motionless, silent, I lay in my bed,

From her's not far remote ; and, still intent  
On all her movements, made pretence to sleep :  
But months and months have past, that I have seen  
her

In such extremity, that all repose  
Flies from my aged limbs. I for my daughter  
Th' assistance of benignant sleep invoked  
Most silently within myself: o'er her  
For many, many nights he has not spread  
His downy wings. Her sobs and sighs at first  
Were almost smother'd ; they were few, were broken ;  
Then (hearing me no longer) they increased  
To such ungovernable agony,  
That, at the last, against her will, they changed  
To passionate tears, to sobs, to piercing screams.  
Amid her agitation, from her lips  
One word alone escaped, " Death ! . . . death ! " and  
oft,

In broken accents, she repeated it.  
I started from my couch ; precipitous  
I ran to her ; and scarce had she beheld me,  
Ere, in the midst, she suddenly repress'd  
Each tear, each sigh, each word, and, recomposed  
In royal stateliness, as if almost  
Incensed with me, in a firm voice she cried,  
" Why comest thou to me ? What would'st thou ?  
Hence ! " . . .

I could not answer her ; I wept, embraced her,  
Then wept again . . . At length my speech return'd.  
Oh how did I implore her, how conjure her  
To tell me her affliction, that, at last,  
Thus in her bosom pent, would, with her life,  
My life destroy . . . Thou surely, though a mother,

Could'st not have spoken to her with more fond,  
 And more persuasive love.—She knows it well  
 How much I love her ; and, at my discourse,  
 Once more the torrents from her eyes gush'd forth,  
 And she embraced me, and with tenderness  
 To my fond importunities replied.  
 But still, inflexibly reserved, she said,  
 That every virgin, when the nuptial day  
 Approaches, is oppress'd with transient grief ;  
 And she commanded me not to divulge  
 Her anguish to her parents. But, alas !  
 So deeply rooted is her malady,  
 So fearful are its inward ravages,  
 That I run tremblingly to thee ; and beg  
 That, by thy means, these rites may be delay'd :  
 To death the virgin goes, be sure of this.—  
 Thou art a mother ; ... I say nothing more.

*Ce.* ... Ah ! ... choak'd by weeping, ... scarcely  
 ... can I speak.—

Whence can this malady arise, ah whence ? ...  
 What other suffering, at her youthful age,  
 Is there, except the suffering of love ?  
 But if by *Pereus* she is inflamed,  
 By her spontaneously chosen, whence,  
 When on the point of gaining him, this grief ?  
 And if another flame feed on her heart,  
 Why hath she chosen *Pereus* herself  
 Among so many others ?

*Eu.* ... Her fierce grief  
 Doth not, I swear to thee, arise from love.  
 She always was observed by me ; nor could she,  
 Without my seeing it, resign her heart  
 To any passion : and she would, be sure,

Have told it me, her mother as to years,  
But, in her love, a sister. Her deportment,  
Her countenance, her sighs, her very silence,  
Ah! all convince me that she loves not Pereus.  
She, if not joyous, was, before she chose,  
Tranquil at least; and thou know'st well how she  
Delay'd to chuse. But yet, assuredly  
No other man pleased her ere she saw Pereus :  
'Tis true, she seem'd to give to him the preference,  
Because it was, or so at least she deem'd it,  
Her duty to chuse one. She loves him not ;  
To me it seems so : yet what other suitor,  
Compared with noble Pereus, can she love ?  
I know her to possess a lofty heart ;  
A heart in which a flame that were not lofty  
Could never enter. This can I safely swear :  
The man that she could love . . . of royal blood  
That man must be, or he were not her lover.  
Now, who of these have ye admitted here,  
Whom at her will she could not with her hand  
Make happy ? Then her grief is not from love.  
Love, though it feed itself with tears and sighs,  
Yet still it leaves I know not what of hope,  
That vivifies the centre of the heart ;  
But in her deep impenetrable gloom  
There glimmers no coy radiance : in her wound,  
Festering and irremediable, there lurks  
No sanative balsamic antidote ! . . .  
Ah, could the death that she invokes for ever  
Be granted first to me ! I should at least  
Not see her thus by a slow fire consumed ! . . .

*Ce.* Thou dost distract me! . . . To these marriage rites

Never will I consent, if they are destin'd  
To take from us our only daughter . . . Go ;  
Return to her ; and do not say to her  
That thou hast spoken with me. I myself,  
Soon as the tears are from my eyes dispersed,  
And my face recomposed, will thither come.

*Eu.* Ah, quickly come. I will return to her ;  
I am impatient once more to behold her.  
Oh heaven ! who knows if she has not once more  
Been with these frantic paroxysms seized,  
While I have thus at length with thee conversed ?  
Alas ! what pity do I feel for thee,  
Unhappy mother ! . . . I fly hence ; but thou,  
Ah, linger not ! . . . The less thou dost delay,  
The more good wilt thou do . . .

*Ce.* How much delay  
Costs me, thou may'st conceive : but I will not  
Call her at such an unaccustom'd hour,  
Nor go to her, much less present myself  
With visage incomposed. It is not fit  
To impress her either with distress or fear :  
So modest, timid, pliable is she,  
That no means with that noble temper can  
Be too indulgent. Quickly, go ; repose  
In me, as I in thee alone repose.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Cecris.*

*Ce.* From whence can this originate ? Already

The year is almost spent, which I've consumed  
 With Euryclea in surmises vain;  
 And yet no trace whence Myrrha's sorrow springs  
 Can I discern!—Perhaps the gods themselves,  
 Envious of our prosperity, would snatch  
 From us so rare a daughter, the sole comfort,  
 Sole hope of both her parents. Oh ye gods,  
 'Twere better never to have given her to us!  
 Oh Venus! thou sublime divinity  
 Of this devoted isle, sacred to thee,  
 Perchance her too great beauty moves thy envy!  
 And hence perchance thou, equally with her,  
 Reducest me to this distracted state.  
 Ah! yes, thou wilt that I should thus atone  
 In tears of blood, for my inordinate,  
 Presumptuous transports of a partial mother.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Cinyras, Cecris.*

*Cin.* Weep not, oh lady. I have briefly heard  
 The painful narrative; to this disclosure  
 I prompted Euryclea. Ah! believe me,  
 Sooner a thousand times would I expire,  
 Than with our idolized and only daughter  
 Adopt coercive means. Who could have thought  
 That by this marriage, which was once her choice,  
 She could be brought to such extremity?  
 But let it be dissolved. My life, my realm,  
 And even my glory vanishes to nothing,  
 If I see not our only daughter happy.

*Ce.* Yet Myrrha ne'er was versatile. We saw her  
 In understanding far surpass her years;



Discreet in every wish ; constant and eager  
Our smallest wishes to anticipate.  
She knows full well, that in her noble choice  
We deem'd ourselves most fortunate : she cannot,  
No, never, hence repent of it.

*Cin.* But yet

If she in heart repent of it !—Oh, lady,  
Hear her : all the soft pleadings of a mother  
Do thou adopt with her ; do thou at length  
Compel her to unfold her heart to thee,  
Since there is time for this. Myself meanwhile  
Will unfold mine to thee ; and I assure thee,  
Nay, e'en I swear, that of my heart's first thoughts  
My daughter is the object. It is true,  
I pleased myself in thinking I should form  
Alliance with the monarch of Epirus :  
And the young Pereus, his noble son,  
Adds, to the future hope of a rich kingdom,  
Other advantages, in my esteem  
More precious far. A character humane,  
A heart no less compassionate than lofty,  
Doth he evince. Besides, he seems to me  
By Myrrha's beauties fervently inflamed.—  
I never could select a worthier consort  
To ensure my daughter happiness ; no doubts  
Of these pledged marriage rites torment his heart ;  
His father's indignation and his own,  
If we renounced our covenanted faith,  
Would be most just ; and their rage might to us  
Be not formidable : thus behold  
Many and potent reasons in the eyes  
Of almost every prince, but none in mine ;  
Nature made me a father ; chance a king.

Those which are deem'd by others of my rank,  
 Reasons of state, to which they are accustom'd  
 To make all natural affections yield,  
 In my paternal bosom would not weigh  
 Against a solitary sigh of Myrrha's.  
 I, by her happiness alone, can be  
 Myself made happy. Go; say this to her;  
 Assure her also that she need not fear  
 Displeasing me in telling me the truth:  
 Nought let her fear, except to make ourselves,  
 Through her own means, unhappy. I meanwhile,  
 By questions artfully proposed, will learn  
 From Pereus if he deem his love return'd;  
 And thus will I prepare him for the issue,  
 No less afflictive to himself than me.  
 But yet the time is brief for doing this,  
 If fate decree that we retract our purpose.

*Ce.* Thou speakest well: I fly to her.—It brings  
 Great solace to me, in our grief, to see  
 That one accordant will, one love, is ours.

## ACT THE SECOND.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cinyras, Pereus.*

*Pe.* Behold me here, obedient to thy wishes.  
 I hope, oh king, the hour is not far distant  
 When with th' endearing epithet of father  
 I may accost thee...

*Cin.* Listen to me, Pereus.—  
 If thou well know thyself, thou canst not fail  
 To be convinced how much a partial father

Must be transported with exceeding joy  
In th' expectation that his only daughter  
Would find in thee a consort. Without doubt,  
Had I myself been destined to select  
A spouse for Myrrha, I had chosen thee  
Among the many and illustrious rivals  
That, with thyself, contended for her hand.  
Thence thou thyself may'st judge how doubly dear  
Thou wert to me when by herself elected.  
Thou, in the judgment of impartial men,  
In all pretensions wert unparagon'd;  
But, in my judgment, more than for thy blood,  
And thy hereditary realm, wert thou  
Unparagon'd for other qualities  
Intrinsically thine, whence thou must be,  
Although a private man, eternally  
Greater than any king . . .

*Pe.* Ah father! . . . (I  
E'en now exult to call thee by this name)  
Father, my greatest, nay, my only value,  
Consists in pleasing thee. I have presumed  
To interrupt thee; pardon me; but I  
Cannot, or ere I merit them, receive  
From thee so many praises. To my heart  
Thy speech will be a high encouragement  
To make me that which thou believ'st me now,  
Or wishest me to be. Thy son-in-law,  
And Myrrha's consort, largely should I be  
With every lofty quality endow'd:  
And I accept from thee the augury  
Of virtue.

*Cin.* Ah, thou speakest as thou art!  
And since thou art such, I shall dare to speak

To thee as to a son.—I clearly see  
Thou lovest Myrrha with a genuine love ;  
And I should wrong thee most unworthily  
Could I e'en doubt of this. But . . . tell me, Pereus, . .  
If my request is not too indiscreet,  
Art thou as much beloved ?

*Pe.* . . . I ought to hide  
Nothing from thee.—Ah, Myrrha would, methinks,  
Love me again, and yet it seems she cannot.  
I cherish'd once a hope of her regard,  
And yet I hope t' obtain it ; or, at least,  
My flattering wishes still prolong the dream.  
'Tis true, that, most inexplicably, she  
Persists in her reserve. Thou, Cinyras,  
Although thou be a father, still retainest  
Thy youthful vigour, and rememberest love.  
Know then, that evermore with trembling steps,  
And as if by compulsion, she accosts me ;  
A deathly paleness o'er her countenance steals ;  
And her fine eyes towards me are never turn'd.  
A few irresolute and broken words  
She falters out, involved in mortal coldness ;  
Her eyes, eternally suffused with tears,  
She fixes on the ground ; in speechless grief  
Her soul is buried ; a pale sickliness  
Dims, not annihilates, her wond'rous charms :—  
Behold her state. Yet of connubial rites  
She speaks ; and now thou would'st pronounce, that  
she  
Desired those rites ; now, that, far worse than death,  
She dreaded them ; now she herself assigns  
The day for these, and now she puts it off.  
If I enquire the reason of her grief,

Her lip denies it ; but her countenance . . .  
Of agony expressive, and of death,  
Proclaims incurable despair.—  
Me she assures, and each returning day  
Renews the assurance, that I am her choice ;  
She says not that she loves me ; high of heart,  
She knows not how to feign. I wish and fear  
To hear from her the truth : I check my tears ;  
I burn, I languish, and I dare not speak.  
Now from her faith, reluctantly bestow'd,  
Would I myself release her ; now again  
I fain would die, since to resign her quite  
I have no power ; yet, unpossess'd her heart,  
Her person would I not possess . . . Alas ! . . .  
I scarcely know whether I live or die.—  
Thus, both oppress'd, and though, with different  
griefs,

Both with affliction equally weigh'd down,  
We to the fatal day at last are come,  
Th' irrevocable day which she herself  
Hath chosen for our marriage . . . Ah, were I  
The only victim of so much distress !

*Cin.* As much as she, dost thou excite my pity . . .  
Thy frank and fervid eloquence bespeaks  
A soul humane and lofty : such a soul  
Did I ascribe to thee : hence to thyself  
I will not less ingenuously speak.—  
I tremble for my child. I share with thee  
A lover's grief ; ah, prince ! do thou too share  
A father's grief with me. Ah, if she were  
Unhappy by my means ! . . . 'Tis true, that none  
Constrain'd her . . . But yet, if timidity,  
Or virgin bashfulness . . . If finally

Myrrha should now capriciously repent ! . . .

*Pe.* No more ; I understand thee. To a lover,  
Who loves as I do, canst thou represent  
The beloved object wretched for his sake ?  
Could I, though innocently, deem myself  
The origin of all her wretchedness,  
And not expire with grief ?—Ah, Myrrha, now  
Pronounce on me, and on my destiny,  
A final sentence ; fearlessly pronounce it,  
If Pereus' love be irksome ; yet for this  
Never shall I regret that I have loved thee.  
Oh, could I make her joyful with my tears ! . . .  
To me 'twould be a blessing e'en to die,  
So that she might be happy.

*Cin.* Pereus, who  
Can hear thee without weeping ? . . . No, a heart  
More faithful, more impassion'd than thine own,  
There cannot be. Ah ! as thou hast to me,  
Could'st thou disclose it also to my daughter :  
She could not hear thee, and refuse t' unfold  
To thee with equal confidence her own.  
I do not think that she repents her choice ;  
(Who, knowing thee, could do this ?) but perchance  
Thou may'st solicit from her heart the source  
Of her conceal'd distress.—Behold, she comes ;  
I had already summon'd her. With her  
I leave thee. To the interview of lovers  
Fathers are ever a restraint. Now, prince,  
Fully reveal to her thy lofty heart,  
A heart by which all others must be sway'd.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Myrrha, Pcreus.*

*My.* With Pcreus he leaves me . . . Fatal trial!  
This rends my heart indeed.

*Pe.* At length, oh Myrrha,  
The day is come, that which, if thou wert so,  
Is destined to make me supremely happy.  
Thy hair with nuptial coronals adorn'd,  
Thy form enveloped in a pompous robe,  
I see indeed: but on thy countenance,  
Thy looks, thy gestures, and in every step,  
Pale melancholy lours. Oh Myrrha, he  
Who loves thee far more than his proper life,  
Cannot behold thee with a mien like this  
To an indissoluble tie approach.  
This is the hour, th' important hour is this,  
When 'tis no more allowable for thee  
To pass delusions on thyself or others.  
Thou should'st divulge to me (whate'er it be)  
The cause of thy distress; or should'st at least  
Confess to me that thou dost not repose  
Thy confidence in me; that I bewray  
Thy injudicious choice, and that at heart  
Thou art repentant, and would'st fain retract.  
I shall not hence account that I am wrong'd;  
Oh no! though this sad heart will be surcharged  
With mortal wretchedness. But what car'st thou  
For the distraction of a man not loved,  
And slenderly esteem'd? It too much now  
Imports to me not to make thee unhappy.  
Then speak to me explicitly and boldly.

But thou art mute and motionless? . . . Thy silence  
Breathes disaffection, . . . death: Thy silence is  
An answer too decisive: . . . thou dost hate me;  
And dar'st not say it . . . Now resume thy faith:  
I instantly prepare myself to fly  
For ever from thine eyes, since I am thus  
An object of aversion . . . But if I  
Was always so, how deserved I thy choice?  
If I became so afterwards, ah, tell me  
In what I have offended thee?

*My.* . . . Oh prince! . . .

Thy overweening love depicts my grief  
More poignant than it is. Beyond the bounds  
Of truth thy heated phantasy impels thee.  
With silence thy unprecedented words  
I hear; what wonder? unexpected things,  
Unacceptable, and e'en more than this,  
Not true, dost thou express: how can I then  
Reply to thee?—This, for our nuptial rites,  
Is the appointed day; I hither come  
To accomplish them: and doth he meanwhile doubt,  
The consort chosen by myself, of me?  
'Tis true, perchance my spirits are not buoyant,  
As her's should be who doth obtain a spouse  
Distinguish'd like thyself: but pensiveness  
In some is nature's cast; and ill could he  
Whose spirits stagnate in a constant ebb,  
Trace the dim cause that interdicts their flow:  
And often an officious questioning,  
Instead of making manifest the cause,  
Redoubles the effect.

*Pe.* I'm irksome to thee;  
I see it by unquestionable symptoms.



Alas! I knew that thou could'st never love me;  
 Yet in my infirm heart I had caress'd  
 At least the flattering hope thou didst not hate me :  
 In time, for thine and my peace, I perceive  
 That I deceived myself!—"Tis not (alas !)  
 Within my power to make thee hate me not :  
 But on myself doth it alone depend  
 To make thee not despise me. Now art thou  
 Freed, and released from all thy promised faith.  
 Against thy will illicitly I gain'd it :—  
 Not by thy parents, . . . and still less by me, . . .  
 By a false shame thou art restrain'd. Thou would'st,  
 Not to incur the blame of versatile,  
 Thine own worst enemy, render thyself  
 The victim of thy error : and dost thou  
 Hope I should suffer this? Ah no!—That I  
 Love thee, that I deserve thee, now I ought  
 To prove this to thee by refusing thee . . .

*My.* Thou dost delight to exasperate my grief..  
 Ah! how can I be joyous in thy presence,  
 If I am destined always to behold  
 Thy love ill-pleased with mine? Can I assign  
 The causes of a grief, for the most part  
 In me supposititious, which, indeed,  
 If true in part, perhaps has no other cause  
 Than the new state which I'm about to enter,  
 And the obligation to divide myself  
 From my beloved parents ; and the words  
 So oft repeated to myself, " Perhaps  
 " I never more shall see them . . . never more?"  
 The long, long pilgrimage to other realms ;  
 The change of manners and the change of place ;  
 The long farewell to all familiar objects,  
 And all familiar friends, from childhood loved ;

And other thoughts, by thousands and by thousands,  
All passionate and tender, and all sad,  
And all indisputably better known,  
And felt more keenly, than by any other,  
By thy humane, courteous, and lofty heart.—  
I gave myself spontaneously to thee ;  
Nor have I ever with repentant thoughts,  
I swear to thee, look'd back on this resolve.  
If it were so, I would have told it to thee :  
Thee, above all men, I esteem ; from thee  
Nothing would I conceal, . . . that I would not  
Likewise, from my own consciousness, conceal.—  
Now I implore, let him who loves me best,  
Speak to me least of this my wretchedness,  
And 'twill in time, I feel assured, depart.  
Could I, not prizing thee, give thee my hand,  
I should despise myself: and how not prize thee ?  
My lip knows not to speak that which my heart  
Doth not first dictate : yet that lip assures thee,  
Swears to thee, that I never will belong  
To any one but thee.—What more can I  
Profess to thee ?

*Pe.* . . . Myrrha, I venture not  
To ask of thee *one thing*, which, could'st thou say it,  
Would give me life indeed ! Fatal demand !  
'Twere death, I fear, to be resolved on this . . .  
Thou to be mine then dost not now disdain ?  
Dost not repent of it, and no delay ?

*My.* No, none ; this is the day ; I will be thine.—  
But let our sails be hoisted to the winds  
To-morrow, and for ever let us leave  
These shores behind us.

*Pe.* Do I hear thee rightly ?

With such abrupt transition how canst thou  
Thus differ from thyself? It tortures thee  
So much to abandon thy beloved parents,  
Thy native country, yet would'st thou depart  
Speedily thus for ever . . .

*My.* I, . . . for ever . . .

Would . . . thus abandon them ; . . . and die of . . . grief . . .

*Pe.* What do I hear? Thy anguish hath betray'd  
thee ; . . .

Thy words and looks are prompted by despair.  
I swear that I will never be the means  
Of thy destruction ; never . . . of my own  
Too certainly . . .

*My.* . . . 'Tis true . . . 'tis too, too true ; . . .

I am distracted by a mighty woe . . .  
But no, believe me not.—Inflexibly  
I to my purpose keep—While I have thus  
My bosom harden'd as it were with grief,  
My parting hence will be less keenly felt :  
A solace in thyself . . .

*Pe.* . . . No, Myrrha, no : . . .

I am the cause, I am, (though innocent)  
Of the dire conflict, which thus lacerates,  
And agitates thy heart.—I will not now  
Longer prevent with my importunate presence  
Needful alleviation of thy grief.—  
Do thou thyself, oh Myrrha, to thy parents  
Propose some means that may deliver thee  
From ties so inauspicious ; or from them  
Thou'lt hear to-day of Pereus' violent death.

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Myrrha.*

*My.* Ah, go not to my parents! . . . Hear me, . . .  
hear me! . . .

He flies from me . . . Oh heaven! what have I said?  
Let me to Euryclea quickly run:  
No, not one instant would I with myself  
Remain alone . . .

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Myrrha, Euryclea.*

*Eu.* Oh whither dost thou fly  
Thus with such breathless haste, beloved daughter?

*My.* Where can I find, if not in thee, some solace?  
To thee I came . . .

*Eu.* I, from a distance, long  
Have watch'd thee carefully. Thou knowest well  
I never can abandon thee: I hope  
That thou wilt pardon me. From thence I saw  
Pereus rush troubled forth; and I find thee  
With heavier grief oppress'd: ah, dearest daughter,  
Thy tears at least may freely have a vent  
Within my breast.

*My.* Ah yes, dear Euryclea,  
With thee I may at least shed tears . . . I feel  
As if my heart would burst from checking them.

*Eu.* And wilt thou, in a state like this, persist,  
Oh daughter, in these hymeneal rites?

*My.* I hope my agonies may kill me first . . .  
But no; that cannot be; the time's too short; . . .

They afterwards will kill me, kill me soon . . .  
Death, . . . death, . . . I have no other wish . . . but  
death . . .

No other destiny, save death . . . deserve . . .

*Eu.* —Myrrha, no other furies can assail  
With such barbarity thy youthful breast,  
Save those of love . . .

*My.* What dar'st thou say to me?  
What cruel falsehood? . . .

*Eu.* Ah, do not, I beseech thee,  
Be grieved with me. For a long time I have thought  
so :

But if it thus displease thee, I will dare  
No more to say it to thee. Ah, may'st thou  
Preserve with me the confidence of weeping !  
Neither do I know well if I believe  
What I have said ; moreover, to thy mother  
I hitherto have strenuously denied it . . .

*My.* What do I hear? Oh heaven ! does she per-  
chance  
Also suspect it? . . .

*Eu.* And who, seeing thus  
A tender virgin in excessive grief,  
And grief apparently without a cause,  
Would not deem love the origin of this ?  
Ah ! were thy grief from love alone ! at least  
Some remedy might then be found.—Immersed  
In this perplexing doubt for a long time,  
I to the altar dared one day to go  
Of Venus, our sublime divinity ;  
With tears, with incense, and persuasive prayers,  
With labouring heart, before her sacred image  
Prostrate, I ventured to pronounce thy name . . .

*My.* Ah! what audacity! What hast thou done?  
 Venus! . . . Oh heaven! . . . inimical to me . . .  
 The force of her implacable revenge . . .  
 What do I say? . . . Alas! . . . I shudder, . . . tremble . . .

*Eu.* 'Tis true, I was audaciously officious:  
 The angry deity disdain'd my vows;  
 The incense, in a smouldering gloom involved,  
 With difficulty burn'd; and, downwards driven,  
 The smoke collected round my hoary head.  
 Would'st thou hear further? I presumed to raise  
 To the stern image my afflicted eyes,  
 And horribly incensed with indignation,  
 With threatening looks the goddess seem'd to me  
 Herself to drive me from her sacred feet.  
 With trembling steps I totter'd from the temple,  
 Palsied with fear . . . In telling this, I feel  
 My hair with horror once more stand on end . . .

*My.* And thou with terror mak'st me also shudder.  
 What hast thou dared to do? By Myrrha now  
 Must no celestial power, and much less that  
 Of our tremendous goddess, be invoked.  
 I am abandon'd by the gods; my breast  
 Opens its chambers to the ravening furies;  
 There they alone authority possess,  
 And residence.—Ah! if there still remains  
 In thee the shadow of a genuine pity,  
 My faithful Euryclea, (thou alone  
 Canst do it,) save me from despair: 'tis slow,  
 Too slow, although 'tis infinite, my grief.

*Eu.* Thou mak'st me tremble . . . What can I? . . .

*My.* . . . I ask thee  
 To abridge my woes. By little and by little  
 Thou seest my o'er-worn, o'er-task'd frame decay;

My lingering agonies destroy my parents;  
 A burden to myself, a curse to others,  
 I never can escape: 'twere pity, love,  
 To expedite my death; from thee I ask it ...

*Eu.* Oh heaven! ... from me? ... My very utterance fails, ...

My breath, ... my thought ...

*My.* Ah no, thou lov'st me not!  
 I weakly deem'd that in thy aged breast  
 There dwelt a comprehensive tenderness ...  
 Yet thou thyself didst in my tender years  
 Exhort me to nobility of thought:  
 Oft have I heard from thee that virtuous souls  
 Should prefer death to infamy. Alas! ...  
 What do I say? ... But thou dost hear me not ...  
 Motionless, .. mute, .. thou scarcely breath'st! Oh  
 heaven! ...

What have I said? Distracted with my pangs ...  
 I know not what I've said: Ah, pardon me;  
 My second mother, be once more thyself ...

*Eu.* .. Oh daughter, daughter! ... Thou ask death  
 from me?

Thou death from me? ...

*My.* Esteem me not ungrateful;  
 Nor that the anguish of my own despair  
 Robs me of pity for the pangs of others.—  
 Wilt thou not see me then extinct in Cyprus?  
 Thou must perforce, ere it be long, be told,  
 That ere the vessel reach Epirus' shore,  
 Myrrha had breathed her last.

*Eu.* In vain dost thou  
 Presume to yield to these abhorred nuptials.  
 I to thy parents fly to tell the whole ...

*My.* Ah, do it not, or irretrievably  
 Thou forfeitest my love : ah, do it not,  
 I pray thee ; in the name of thy true love  
 I do conjure thee. From a troubled heart  
 Accents escape which should not be recorded—  
 An ample solace (one which hitherto  
 I've not allow'd) hath been my tears with thee,  
 The speaking of my grief : in me already  
 My courage hence is doubled.—A few hours  
 Are wanting to my solemn nuptial rite.  
 Be ever near me : let us go. Meanwhile  
 It is thy province to confirm me more  
 In my inevitable lofty purpose.  
 Thou by thy faithful council, and thy more  
 Than mother's love, at once should'st strengthen me ;  
 Thou should'st so act, that firmly I pursue  
 The sole remaining honourable track.

## ACT THE THIRD.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cinyras, Cecris.*

*Ce.* There is no doubt that Pereus, though he be  
 Not yet return'd to us, by Myrrha's words  
 Was wholly mortified. She loves him not ;  
 I am convinced of this ; and 'tis too certain  
 That perseverance in these purposed nuptials  
 Will in the end conduct her to the tomb.

*Cin.* For the last trial now, will we ourselves  
 Hear from her lips the truth. I, in thy name,  
 Have summon'd her to meet thee in this place.  
 None of us, lastly, would compel her choice :



She knows how much we love her ; we, to whom  
 Ourselves are not more dear. To me it seems  
 Now utterly impossible, that she,  
 In this respect, should close to us her heart ;  
 To us, who have made her the arbitress  
 Not only of herself, but of ourselves.

*Ce.* Behold, she comes ! . . . and oh ! she seems to  
 me

Somewhat more joyful, and her step more firm . . .  
 Ah ! could she be again what once she was !  
 At the sole reappearance in her face  
 E'en of a smile of joy, I quickly seem  
 Restored once more to life.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Myrrha, Cinyras, Cecris.*

*Ce.* Beloved daughter,  
 Ah, come to us ! ah come !

*My.* What do I see ?  
 Oh heaven ! my father also ! . . .

*Cin.* Haste, advance ;  
 Our only hope and life, advance securely ;  
 And apprehend not my paternal aspect  
 More than thou fear'st thy mother's. We are both  
 Ready to hear thee. Now, if thou art pleased  
 The cause to tell us of thy cruel state,  
 Thou giv'st us life ; but if it rather please thee,  
 Or spare thy apprehensive delicacy  
 More, to conceal it, thou may'st also, daughter,  
 Conceal it ; for thy pleasure will be ours.  
 To eterhize the matrimonial tie  
 One hour alone is wanting : every one

Deems it a thing decided : but, if yet  
Thy will is changed ; if thy committed faith  
Be irksome to thy heart ; if thy free choice,  
Though once spontaneous, be no longer such ;  
Be bold ; fear nothing in the world ; reveal  
All the misgivings of thy heart to us.  
Thou art by nothing bound ; and we ourselves  
The first release thee ; and thy generous lover,  
Worthy of thee, confirms this liberty.  
Nor will we tax thee with inconstancy :  
Rather will we admit, that thoughts mature,  
Though unforeseen, constrain thee to this change.  
By base regards thou never canst be moved ;  
Thy noble character, thy lofty thoughts,  
Thy love for us, full well we know them all :  
A step of thee, and of thy blood unworthy,  
Thou never could'st e'en think it. Freely then  
Do thou fulfil thy wish. Provided thou  
Art once more happy, with that happiness  
Thou renderest thy parents happy also.  
Now, this thy present will whate'er it be,  
Do thou to us reveal it as to brothers.

*Ce.* Ah yes, thou seest, Myrrha ! Never didst thou  
Hear words of more persuasive tenderness,  
More mild, more tender, from thy mother's lips  
Than these.

*My.* . . . Is there a torment in the world  
That can compare with mine ! . . .

*Ce.* But what is this ?

Sighing, thou mutterest to thyself ?

*Cin.* Ah let,

Ah let thy heart speak to us : we will use  
No other language with thee—Quick, reply.

*My.* . . . My lord . . .

*Cin.* Ah Myrrha, 'tis a sad beginning :  
To thee I am a father, not a lord :  
Canst thou invoke me with another name,  
Oh daughter ?

*My.* Myrrha, this is the last conflict.—  
Be strong, my soul . . .

*Ce.* Oh heaven ! . . . The hues of death  
Upon her countenance . . .

*My.* On mine ? . . .

*Cin.* But whence  
Tremblest thou thus ? At me ? . . .

*My.* . . . I tremble not . . .

Methinks—or I, at least, no more shall tremble,  
Since ye now so compassionately hear me.—  
Your only, your too well beloved daughter,  
I well know that I am. I see you always,  
My joys enjoying, grieving in my griefs ;  
E'en this my grief increases. Mine, alas !  
Passes the confines of a natural sorrow ;  
In vain I hide it ; and to you would speak it, . . .  
If I knew it myself.—My fatal sadness  
With growing years augmented every day,  
Long ere, amid the illustrious company  
Of noble lovers, Pereus I selected.  
Within my breast an angry deity,  
Unknown, inexorable, dwells ; and hence,  
All power of mine is vain against his power . . .  
Mother, believe me ; though I be but young,  
My mind, e'en passing ordinary strength,  
Was, and is, strong : but my distemper'd frame,  
That yields o'er-burthen'd ; . . . and I feel myself  
With slow, though sure steps, tottering to the tomb . .

All food, though scanty, and though only touch'd  
At distant intervals, to me is poison :  
Sleep everlastingly forsakes my pillow ;  
Or dreams, with horrid images of death,  
My frame enervate more than sleepless nights.  
I do not find, throughout the day or night,  
A moment's peace, an instant of repose,  
A place that seems a resting place to me.  
Yet nothing in the shape of human comfort  
Do I presume to covet ; death I deem,  
Expect, solicit as, my only cure.  
But, for my punishment, does Nature yet,  
With her tenacious and invisible bands,  
Protract my lingering life. I pity now,  
And now I hate, myself : I weep, and rave,  
And weep again. This, this is the incessant,  
Insufferable, fierce vicissitude,  
In which I drag along my heavy days.—  
But what ? . . . Do you too at my horrid state  
Shed tears ? . . . Beloved mother ! . . . Let me then, . . .  
To thy breast clinging, . . . drinking in thy tears, . . .  
Forego the sense of suffering for a moment ! . . .

*Ce.* Beloved daughter, at a tale like this,  
Who could refrain from weeping ? . . .

*Cin.* At her words  
I feel my bosom rent . . . But finally,  
What ought we now to do ? . . .

*My.* But finally,  
(Ah ! trust to what I say) I ne'er conceived  
The wish to afflict you, or to extort from you  
Vain pity for myself, describing thus,  
Or trying to describe what mocks description,  
My fierce unutterable pangs.—When I,

By chasing Peneus, had fix'd my fate,  
 At first, 'tis true, I to myself appear'd  
 Somewhat less troubled ; but within my heart  
 Proportionably fierce my grief return'd,  
 As nearer and more near the day approach'd  
 For forming the indissoluble tie.  
 So much so, that three times indeed I dared  
 To beg you to procrastinate the day.  
 In these delays I somewhat calm'd myself ;  
 But, as the time diminish'd, all my pangs  
 Resumed their wonted fierceness. To their height,  
 To my consummate shame, consummate grief,  
 Are they to-day arrived : but something tells me  
 That they, to-day, are giving in my breast,  
 The last proof of their strength. This day shall see  
 me

Consort to Peneus, or . . . a breathless corpse.—

*Ce.* What do I hear ? . . . Oh daughter ! . . . Wilt  
 thou thus

In these lugubrious nuptials persevere ? . . .

*Cin.* No, this shall never be. Thou lov'st not Pe-  
 reus ;

And, spite of inclination, thou, in vain,  
 Would'st give thyself to him.

*My.* Ah, do not ye

Take me from him ; or quickly give me death . . .

'Tis true, perhaps, I love him not as much

As he loves me ; . . . and yet, of this I doubt . . .

Believe, that I sufficiently esteem him ;

And that no other man in all the world,

If he have not, shall have my hand. I hope

That Peneus, one day, as he ought to be,

Will to my heart be dear ; living with him

In constant and inseparable faith,  
 I hope that, by his means, peace will return,  
 Joy will return to me ; that life may be  
 Still dear to me, and peradventure happy.  
 Ah ! if I hitherto have loved him not  
 As he deserves, 'tis not a fault of mine,  
 But rather of my state ; which makes me first  
 Abhor myself. . . Him have I chosen once :  
 And now again I chuse him : wish for him,  
 Solicit him, and him alone. . My choice  
 Beyond expression to yourselves was grateful :  
 Be then, as ye will'd, and as now I will,  
 The whole accomplish'd, Do ye try to rise  
 Above your daughter's grief too, since that daughter  
 Who suffers it, rises above that grief.  
 I will, ere long, as much as in me lies,  
 Come to these nuptials cheerfully ; and ye,  
 Perchance, will hold yourselves indebted to them  
 For days of future peace.

*Ce.* Oh matchless daughter !

How many rare perfections thou unitest !

*Cin.* Thy words a little calm me ; but I tremble . . .

*My.* I feel, while thus in conference with you,  
 My strength return. I may again perchance  
 Wholly become the mistress of myself,  
 If the gods will, provided ye will lend  
 Me your assistance.

*Cin.* What assistance ?

*Ce.* Speak !

We will do every thing.

*My.* I am constrain'd  
 Once more to grieve you. Hear.—To my worn  
 breast,

And to my troubled, weak, distemper'd mind,  
The sight of objects new to me will prove  
A potent remedy ; and this will be  
Effectual in proportion as 'tis speedy.  
What it will cost me to abandon you,  
Oh heaven ! I cannot say ; my tears will tell it,  
When I give you the terrible farewell :  
If without falling lifeless . . . in thy arms,  
I can, . . . oh mother, . . . do it . . . But, if yet  
I can abandon you, the day will come,  
When, to this generous effort, I shall owe  
Life, peace, and happiness.

*Ce.* Dost thou thus speak  
Of leaving us ? Would'st do it instantly ?  
At once dost fear and wish to do it ? Whence  
Such inconsistency ? . . .

*Cin.* T' abandon us ? . . .

And what remains to us deprived of thee ?  
Thou may'st at leisure afterwards depart  
To Pereus' father ; but meanwhile ere this  
With us enjoy protracted happiness . . .

*My.* But if 'tis now impossible for me  
Here to be happy, would ye rather see me  
In Cyprus dead, than, from a foreign shore,  
Hear tidings of my full felicity ?—  
Sooner, or later, to Epirus' realm  
My destiny invites me : there should I  
With Pereus finally abide. To you,  
When Pereus the paternal sceptre sways,  
One day will we return. Ye shall again  
In Cyprus see me, if the gods so grant,  
The joyful mother of a numerous offspring :  
And we will leave to you, of all our children

The one which ye love best, to be the prop  
 Of your declining years. Thus of your blood  
 Shall ye possess an heir to this rich realm ;  
 Since offspring of the stronger sex, the gods  
 Have hitherto denied to you. Then first,  
 The day on which ye suffer'd me to go,  
 Will ye commemorate with blessings.—Ah,  
 Grant that to-morrow Peneus and I  
 Spread to the wind our sails. Within my heart  
 I feel a certain and tremendous presage,  
 That I, if ye prohibit my departure,  
 Alas ! within this inauspicious palace,  
 Remain to-day th' inevitable victim  
 Of an inscrutable and unknown power :  
 That ye will lose me everlastingly . . .  
 Do you, I pray, compassionately yield  
 To my fantastic presage ; or be pleased,  
 Indulging my distemper'd phantasy,  
 To second what perchance ye deem an error.  
 My life, my destiny, and also (Heavens !  
 I shudder as I speak) your destiny,  
 All, all, too much depend on my departure.

*Ce.* Oh daughter ! . . .

*Cin.* Ah ! . . . thy accents make me tremble . . .  
 But yet, if such thy will, so be it done.  
 Whate'er may be my grief, I would prefer  
 Never to see thee, than to see thee thus.—  
 And thou, sweet consort, mute, and motionless,  
 In tears ? . . . Consentest thou to her desire ?

*Ce.* Ah ! could her absence kill me, as (alas !)  
 I feel assured that I shall hence be doomed  
 To languish in immitigable tears ! . . .  
 Ah ! might the augury one day prove true



Which she suggested of her precious offspring ;...  
 But yet, since such is her fantastic wish,  
 So that she live, let it be gratified.

*My.* Beloved mother, now thou givest me  
 Life for the second time.—Within an hour  
 Shall I be ready for the nuptial rites.—  
 Whether I love you, time will prove to you ;  
 Though now I seem impatient to forsake you.—  
 Now, for a little while, do I retire  
 To my apartments : fain would I appear  
 With tearless eyes before the sacred altar ;  
 And worthy of acceptance, and approved,  
 With brow serene my noble consort meet.

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Cinyras, Cecris.*

*Ce.* Unhappy that we are !... Unhappy daughter !...

*Cin.* Yet to behold her every day more sad,  
 My heart hath not the firmness. 'Twere in vain  
 To oppose ourselves...

*Ce.* Oh spouse !... A thousand fears  
 Invade my heart, lest her excess of grief,  
 When she is gone from hence, should cause her  
 death.

*Cin.* From her expressions, from her looks, and  
 gestures,  
 And also from her sighs, it seems to me  
 That by some superhuman agency  
 She's fearfully possess'd.

*Ce.* ... Ah ! well I know,  
 Implacable, vindictive Venus, well,

Thy rigorous revenge. Thus dost thou make me  
Atene for my irreverent arrogance.

But ah ! my child was innocent ; I only  
Was the delinquent ; I alone the culprit . . .

*Cin.* Oh heaven ! what hast thou dared against the  
goddess ? . . .

*Ce.* Unhappy me ! . . . Oh Cinyras, hear my fault ;  
When I beheld myself the spouse adored  
Of the most winning and attaching husband,  
A man for captivating grace unequal'd,  
And by him mother of an only daughter,  
(For beauty, modesty, and sense, and grace  
Throughout the world unrival'd) I confess,  
Intoxicate with my distinguish'd lot,  
I dared deny to Venus, I alone,  
Her tributary incense.—Would'st thou more ?  
Insensate, and extravagant, at last  
To such a pitch (alas infatuate !)  
Of madness I arrived, that from my lips  
I suffer'd the imprudent vaunt to escape,  
That by the illustrious, celebrated beauty  
Of Myrrha, now more votaries were drawn  
From Asia and from Greece, than heretofore  
Were e'er attracted to her sacred isle  
By warm devotion to the Cyprian queen.

*Cin.* Oh ! what is this thou sayest ? . . .

*Ce.* From that day  
Henceforward, Myrrha lost her peace ; her life,  
Her beauty, like frail wax before the fire,  
Slowly consumed ; and nothing in our hands  
From that time seem'd to prosper. Afterwards  
What did I not attempt to appease the goddess ?  
What prayers, what tears, what penitential rites

Have I not lavish'd?—Evermore in vain!—

*Cin.* Ill hast thou done, oh lady; and still worse  
Hath been thy guilt, in keeping it from me.

A father wholly innocent, perchance,

I might by means of mediatorial rites

The pardon of the goddess impetrate:

And yet perchance (I hope) I may succeed.—

But meanwhile, now indeed do I concur

In Myrrha's judgment, that of force we must,

And with what promptitude we can effect it,

Remove her from this desecrated isle.

Who knows? Perchance the anger of the goddess

Will not to other climes pursue her? *Hence*

Our wretched daughter feeling in her breast

Such an imperative and unknown presage,

Perhaps *hence* alone, so much desires to go,

And builds on this departure such warm hopes.—

But *Pereus* comes; welcome he comes: he only,

By taking her away from us, can now

For us our daughter save.

*Ce.* Oh destiny!

#### SCENE THE FOURTH:

*Cinyras, Pereus, Cecris.*

*Pe.* Tardy, irresolute, and apprehensive,  
And full of mortal wretchedness, ye see me.

A bitter conflict lacerates my heart:

Me, pity, and disinterested love

Of others, have subdued. This sacrifice

Will cost my life. No otherwise this grieves me

Than that I thus have forfeited the power

To spend it in your service: but I will not,

No, I will never drag t'untimely death  
My adored Myrrha! The disastrous tie  
Shall now be torn asunder; and with that  
The thread of my existence.

*Cin* . . . Oh my son! . . .

Yet by this name I call thee; and I hope  
That thou ere long more than in name will be so.  
We, since thyself, have heard explicitly  
The secret thoughts of Myrrha: I have taken,  
As a true father, every means with her,  
To encourage her with absolute free will  
Her own unbiass'd judgment to pursue.  
But 'mid the winds the rock is not more firm,  
Than she is firm to thee: thee, thee, alone  
She wills, and she solicits; and she fears  
Lest thou be taken from her. She knows not  
Herself how to adduce to us a cause  
For her despondency: her infirm health,  
Which was at first the effect of this, perchance  
Is now its only cause. But her deep grief  
Deserves much pity, be it what it may;  
Nor should she wake in thee, more than in us,  
Any dissatisfaction. A sweet solace  
Thou wilt be of her ills: on thy firm love  
Her hopes are founded all. What stronger proof  
Would'st thou require than this? She will herself  
At all events abandon us to-morrow;  
(Us, who so dearly love her) and for this  
Th' assign'd inducement is to be with thee  
More uniformly; to become more thine.

*Pe*. Ah, could I trust to this? but 'specially  
This her abrupt departure . . . Ah, I tremble,  
Lest she designs in secret to make me

Th' instrument of her death.

*Ce.* Pereus, to thee

Do we confide her : fate to-day decrees it.  
Too certainly before our very eyes  
Here would she fall extinct, if to her will  
Our hearts permitted us to persevere  
In opposition. Change of place and scene  
Potently operates on youthful minds.  
Then lay aside all inauspicious thoughts ;  
And think alone of making her more happy.  
Bring to thy countenance its wonted cheer ;  
And by avoiding mention of her grief,  
Soon wilt thou see that grief itself subside.

*Pe.* May I believe then, certainly believe,  
That Myrrha hates me not ?

*Cin.* From me thou may'st

Believe it, yes ! What heretofore I said  
Remember ! by her words I'm now convinced,  
That far from being the source of her distress,  
She deems these nuptials her sole remedy.  
She must be treated with indulgence ; thus  
She will submit to any thing. Go thou ;  
Quickly prepare thyself for festive pomp ;  
And at the same time every thing dispose  
For taking from us by to-morrow's dawn  
Our only daughter. We will not assemble  
Before the altar of the public temple  
In sight of all the inhabitants of Cyprus ;  
For the long rite would be an obstacle  
To your abrupt departure. We will chaunt  
The hymeneal anthems in this palace.

*Pe.* Thou hast restored me suddenly to life.  
I fly ; and here will instantly return.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE THE FIRST.

*Euryclea, Myrrha.*

*My.* Yes, Euryclea, thou beholdest me  
Completely tranquillized; and almost joyous,  
At my resolved departure.

*Eu.* Can this be? . . .  
Alone with Perceus wilt thou hence depart? . . .  
Nor of so many of thy faithful hand-maids  
Wilt thou select even one? Not even me  
Wilt thou distinguish from this wide neglect? . . .  
What will become of me, my dearest child,  
If thou abandon me? alas, I feel  
Ready to die at the mere thought of this . . .

*My.* Ah! hold thy peace . . . One day I shall re-  
turn . . .

*Eu.* Ah! may the Heavens grant this! Beloved  
daughter! . . .  
I did not think that thou wert capable  
Of such a stern resolve: I always hoped  
That thou at last would'st close my dying eyes . . .

*My.* I should have chosen thee, and thee alone,  
If I, by any means, could have resolved  
To take an inmate of this palace with me . . .  
But against this am I inflexible . . .

*Eu.* And at to-morrow's dawn thou go'st from  
hence? . . .

*My.* I from my parents have at length obtain'd  
Permission to do this; the rising sun  
Will see our vessel wafted from this shore.

*Eu.* Auspicious be the day to thee! . . . : Could I  
Know thou wert really happy! . . . 'Tis in truth,  
A cruel and a mortifying joy,  
That thou dost manifest in leaving us . . .  
Yet, if it please thee, I will weep, though mute,  
With thy afflicted mother . . .

*My.* Wherefore thus  
My heart already too assailable  
Dost thou assail? Why force me thus to weep? . . .

*Eu.* Oh! how can I suppress my bursting tears . . .  
This is the last time that I shall behold,  
And shall embrace thee. Thou forsakest me  
With many years bow'd down, and still more bow'd  
With wretchedness. I shall be in my grave  
At thy return, if that should ever be:  
Some tears, I hope that, . . . thou at least wilt give . . .  
To the remembrance . . . of thy Euryclea . . .

*My.* For pity's sake . . . oh! . . . quit me; . . . or at  
least

Be silent.—I command thee, hold thy peace.  
It is my duty now to be to all  
Inflexible; and chiefly to myself.—  
This is a day sacred to nuptial joy.  
Oh, if thou e'er hast loved me, I require—  
Of thee to-day the last hard proof of this;  
Restrain thy tears, . . . and mine.—I see already  
My consort coming.—Let all grief be mute.

#### SCENE THE SECOND.

*Pereus, Myrrha, Euryclea.*

*Pc.* Thy father, Myrrha, hath transported me—  
With unexpected joy: my destiny,

Which I expected trembling, he himself  
Hath cheerfully announced to me as happy.  
Since thou wilt have it so, by morrow's dawn,  
At thy command, my sails shall be unfurl'd.  
It pleases me at least, thy parents yield  
Contentedly and placidly to this :  
For me no other pleasure there can be  
Save that of satisfying thy desires.

*My.* Yes, much-loved consort ; for by this fond  
name

Already I accost thee ; if a wish  
My bosom ever fervently inspired,  
Now do I wish intensely, nay I will,  
To-morrow, at the break of day, to part  
From hence with thee. To find myself at once  
With thee alone ; no longer to behold  
One of the many objects in my sight  
So long the witnesses, and perhaps the cause,  
Of my distress ; to sail in unknown seas ;  
To land in countries hitherto unseen ;  
To breathe a fresh invigorating air ;  
And evermore to witness at my side,  
Beaming with exultation, and with love,  
A spouse like thee ; all this, I am convinced,  
Will renovate me soon a second time  
To be what once I was. Less irksome, then,  
I trust that I shall be to thee. Meanwhile  
My state will stand in need of some indulgence ;  
But, be assured that this will not last long.  
My grief, if never to my mind recall'd,  
Will be eradicated soon. Do thou,  
Of my abandon'd and paternal realm,  
Of my disconsolate and childless parents,





I cannot be the object of thy hate.

*My.* What say'st thou? Learn, ah learn better to know,

Better to appreciate thyself and Myrrha!

To thy so various endowments, thou

Addest such boundless love, that thou deservest

A far, far different object to myself.

Love in my bosom will enshrine his fires,

When he has clear'd it of its blighting tears.

And oh, to-day, be pleased to accept it, thou,

An ample and indubitable proof

Of this, that I select thyself alone

As with medicinable power endow'd

To heal my bosom's festering malady;

That I esteem thee, that with lofty voice

I hail thee as my only true deliverer.

*Pe.* Thou dost inflame me with excessive joy:

Never till now did accents sweet as these

Flow from thy beauteous lips: within my heart

Engraved in characters of fire they live.—

Behold the priests, and the hymeneal train,

And our dear parents, hitherward advance.

Ah! may this moment be to thee propitious,

As it hath been the brightest of my life.

#### SCENE THE THIRD.

*Priests, Chorus of Children, Virgins, and old Men,  
Cinyras, Cecris, People, Myrrha, Percus, Euryclea.*

*Cin.* Beloved children, I infer, at least,

A joyful augury from seeing you

Precede us thus to the hymeneal rite.

On thy face Pereus transport is express'd;

And I behold my daughter's countenance  
 Serene and resolute, The immortal gods  
 With looks benign assuredly regard us.  
 With copious incense be the altars heap'd;  
 While the full choir with pealing harmony  
 Propitiates the gods, and to the skies  
 Breathed acceptably forth from hearts devout  
 Our loud, and long resounding hymns ascend.

CHORUS.

Hymen, benignant god, brother of Love,  
 Of frail humanity the soothing friend,  
 On us propitiously do thou descend;—  
 And bid henceforth these happy votaries prove  
 A flame so pure from thy inspiring breath,  
 That nothing may extinguish it but death.

CHILDREN.

Come to us, Hymen, with triumphant joy,  
 Borne on thy brother's wings descend below;

VIRGINS.

With his own craft deceive the treacherous boy  
 Both of his darts, his quiver, and his bow.

OLD MEN.

But do thou come exempt from all his arts,  
 His soft caprices, and insidious sighs:

CHORUS.

And deign, oh Hymen, to unite two hearts,  
 In mutual love unmatch'd, with thy firm ties.

*Eu.* Daughter, what ails thee? How thou tremblest? ... Ah...

*My.* Peace ... peace ...

*Eu.* But yet ...

*My.* No, no; ... I do not tremble.

## CHORUS.

Mother sublime of Hymen, and of Love,  
A goddess e'en among the gods art thou;  
Whose high supremacy in heaven above,  
Or in the earth, none dare to disavow;  
From old Olympus' heights, oh Venus, deign  
Upon this pair propitiously to smile;  
If e'er the rites of this thy sacred isle  
Thy kind protection haply might obtain.

## CHILDREN.

Those peerless charms from thee derive their birth,  
Bestow'd on Myrrha with such lavish wealth;

## VIRGINS.

Restoring her once more to joy and health,  
Be pleased to leave thy image on the earth;

## OLD MEN.

Lastly, make her the mother of a race  
So noble, that their father may confess,  
Grandsires, and subjects, that past wretchedness  
Is all forgotten in their matchless grace.

## CHORUS.

Benignant goddess, gloriously unfold,  
From the pure empyrean's azure height,—

Drawn by thy swans with plumes of downy white,  
Throned in thy chariot of translucent gold,—  
Thy form majestic :—and by thy side

Conduct thy son :—thy veil of roseate bloom—  
Cast o'er thy votaries,—pregnant with perfume;—  
And let one spirit o'er two forms preside.—

*Ce.* Yes, daughter, yes, with meek subserviency  
Thou always soughtest to secure the favour  
Of our all-powerful goddess . . . But, alas ! . . .  
Thy countenance changes ? . . . Thou art faint, and  
trembling ? . . .

And scarce thy faltering knees . . .

*My.* For pity's sake,  
Do not, oh mother, with thy accents bring  
My constancy to too severe a test.  
I cannot answer for my countenance ; . . .  
But this I know, the purpose of my heart  
Is steady and immutable.

*Eu.* For her  
I feel as if my very life would fail.

*Pe.* Ah ! more and more her countenance is troubled ? . . .

Whence is this tremor which assaults my frame ?—

#### CHORUS.

Pure faith, and concord lasting and benign,  
Have in the bosom of this lofty pair  
Irrevocably placed their sacred shrine ;  
And fell Alecto would in vain repair  
To trouble with her torch's lurid glare  
The lovely bride's firm and unswerving heart ;  
And deadly Discord, frantic with despair,

Himself consumes, and curses his weak art,  
And from the noble pair all powers malign depart.

*My.* What is it that ye say? My heart already  
By all the baneful furies is assaulted.

See them; the rabid sisters round me glare  
With sable torches, and with snaky scourge;  
Behold such torches as this Hymen merits...

*Cin.* Oh heaven! what do I hear?

*Ce.* My child, thou ravest...

*Pe.* Oh fatal rites! ye ne'er shall be perform'd...

*My.* But what? The hymns have ceased?... Who  
to his breast

Thus clasps me? Where am I? What have I said?  
Am I a spouse already?...

*Pe.* Thou art not,  
Myrrha, espoused; nor shalt thou ever be  
The spouse of Pereus, to thee I swear.  
Not less intense, but different to thine,  
The execrable furies tear my heart.  
Thou hast made me a derision to the world,  
And to myself, e'en more than I'm to thee,  
An object of abhorrence: I for this  
Will not make thee unhappy. Thou hast now,  
Though 'gainst thy will, fully betray'd thyself:  
And thou hast finally beyond all doubt  
Divulged the invincible and long aversion  
Which thou hast cherish'd towards me. We are  
happy,

That thou hast thus betray'd thyself in time.  
Now from the self-imposed and hated yoke  
Art thou released for ever. Safe art thou,  
And from all ties exempt. Henceforth will I

Remove for ever from thy troubled sight  
 My odious presence . . . Satisfied, and happy,  
 Thou by my means shalt be . . . and thou ere long  
 Shalt learn the last resource that did remain  
 For one, who, hoping to obtain thee, lost thee.

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Cinyras, Myrrha, Cecris, Euryclea, Priests, Chorus,  
 People.*

*Cin.* The rite is now profaned; hence, hence this  
 pomp,  
 This ineffectual pomp: let the hymns cease.  
 Meanwhile, oh priests, withdraw elsewhere.—I will,  
 (A wretched father) weep at least unseen.

## SCENE THE FIFTH.

*Cinyras, Myrrha, Cecris, Euryclea.*

*Eu.* Ah! far more dead than living Myrrha stands:  
 Behold, I scarcely can support her form.  
 Oh daughter! . . .

*Cin.* Ladies, leave her to herself  
 A prey, and to her own flagitious furies.  
 She, with her unexampled waywardness,  
 Spite of myself, at last hath render'd me  
 Inflexible and cruel: for her state  
 No more I feel compassion. She herself,  
 Almost against the wishes of her parents,  
 Would to the altar come: and this alone  
 To o'erwhelm us with her own disgrace and ours? . . .  
 Thou too compassionate, deluded mother,  
 Leave her: if hitherto we were not stern,

The day at length is come to be so.

*My.* Yes.

'Tis as it should be: Cinyras, be thou  
With me inexorable: for nought else  
I wish; nought else I will. He, he alone  
Can terminate all the disquietudes  
Of an unhappy and unworthy daughter.—  
That which is now dependent at thy side...  
That vengeful sword... plunge it within my breast...  
Thou gav'st to me this wretched hated life,  
Take thou it from me: lo! the last, last gift  
For which I supplicate thee... Ah, reflect,  
That if thyself, and with thy own right hand,  
Do not destroy me, thou reservest me...  
... And for nought else... to perish by my own.

*Cin.* O daughter!...

*Ce.* Oh unutterable anguish!...

Ah! thou'rt a father; thou a father art;...  
Wherefore exasperate her? ... Is she not  
Sufficiently afflicted? ... Thou seest clearly  
That she is scarce the mistress of herself;  
Her reason sinks beneath her mighty anguish...

*Eu.* Oh Myrrha... daughter... dost thou hear  
me not?

My tears... prevent... my utterance...

*Cin.* Oh state!...

By such a terrible sight I am o'ercome...

Ah yes, I am e'en yet too much a father:

And of all fathers most unfortunate...

Already by compassion more than rage

Am I possess'd. I will betake myself

Elsewhere to weep. Watch ye meanwhile o'er her.—



When she has regain'd her reason, speedily,  
She afterwards must hear her father speak.

## SCENE THE SIXTH.

*Cecris, Myrrha, Euryclea.*

*Eu.* Ah see, once more her senses she resumes ...

*Ce.* Leave me alone with her, good Euryclea;  
I would speak to her.

## SCENE THE SEVENTH.

*Cecris, Myrrha.*

*My.* Is my father gone? ...

He then, he will not kill me? Ah, do thou  
In pity, mother, give to me a sword;  
Ah yes, if there indeed remains in thee  
The shadow of regard for me, a sword,  
Give me thyself without delay. I am  
In full possession of my faculties;  
And well I know the mighty consequence  
Of this my fervent prayer: ah trust for once  
My judgment; trust it while there yet is time:  
Thou wilt repent hereafter, but in vain,  
If thou to-day grantest me not a sword.

*Ce.* Beloved child, ... oh heaven! ... assuredly  
From grief thou ravest.—From thy mother thou  
Would'st never ask a sword ...—Now, let us speak  
No more of nuptial rites: a strength of mind  
Not to be parallel'd, hath led thee on  
To accomplish what thou promisedst; but, ah!  
Stronger than thou was nature: fervently  
For this I thank the gods. Thou e'er shalt be

Clasp'd in the arms of thy indulgent mother :  
 And if to eternal tears thou'rt self-condemn'd,  
 I will weep also evermore with thee,  
 Nor ever, even for an instant, leave thee :  
 We will be one in all things ; e'en thy grief,  
 Since it will not abandon thee, will I  
 Appropriate to myself. And thou shalt find  
 In me a sister, rather than a mother . . .  
 But what, oh heaven, is this ? . . . Beloved child, . . .  
 Art thou incensed 'gainst me ? . . . repellst me ? . . .  
 Refusest to embrace me ? . . . and dost dart  
 Indignant and exasperated looks . . .  
 Alas ! . . . oh daughter, . . . e'en towards thy mother ? . . .

*My.* Ah ! too much it increases my despair,  
 Even the seeing thee : thou, more and more,  
 Rendest my heart when thou embracest me . . .  
 Alas ! . . . what do I say ? . . . Beloved mother ! . . .  
 A vile, flagitious, and unworthy daughter  
 Am I, who love deserve not. Leave thou me  
 To my dire destiny ; or if thou feel  
 For me true pity, I repeat it to thee,  
 Kill me.——

*Ce.* Ah, rather I should kill myself,  
 If I were doom'd to lose thee : cruel daughter !  
 Canst thou speak to me, and repeat to me  
 So horrible a wish ?—Rather, will I  
 From this hour forth perpetually watch  
 Over thy life.

*My.* Thou, thou o'er my life watch ?  
 Must I, at every instant, I, behold thee ?  
 Thou evermore before my eyes ? Ah first,  
 I will that these same eyes of mine be closed  
 In everlasting darkness : I myself

With these my very hands would pluck them first  
From my own forehead . . .

*Ce.* What say'st thou? . . . oh heaven! . . .  
Thou mak'st me shudder. Then thou hatest me? . . .

*My.* Thou first, thou sole, fatal, eternal cause  
Of all my wretchedness . . .

*Ce.* What words are these? . . .  
Oh daughter! . . . I the cause? . . . But see thy tears  
Gush forth in torrents . . .

*My.* Pardon, pardon me! . . .  
It is not I that speak; an unknown power  
Rules my distemper'd organs . . . Dearest mother!  
Too much thou lovest me; and I . . .

*Ce.* Dost thou  
Deem me the cause?

*My.* Yes, thou, alas! hast been  
In giving life to such an impious wretch  
The cause of all my woes; and art so still,  
If thou refusest now to take it from me;  
Now that I importune thee for this deed  
So fervently. There yet is time for this;  
Yet I am innocent . . . almost . . . —But oh!  
Against such agonies . . . my languid frame . . .  
No more bears up . . . —My strength, . . . my senses  
fail . . .

*Ce.* To thy apartments suffer me to lead thee.  
Thou need'st some cordial to restore thy strength.  
This transient frenzy, trust me, hath arisen  
From too long fasting. Ah, come thou; in me  
Fully confide; I, I alone will serve thee.

## ACT THE FIFTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cinyras.*

*Cin.* Oh, ill-starr'd, wretched Pereus ! Too true lover ! . . .

Ah, had I been more swift in my arrival,  
Thou hadst not then perchance against thy breast  
The fatal weapon aim'd.—When he knows this,  
What will become of his disconsolate father ?  
Espoused and joyful he expected him ;  
Now will he see him brought before his eyes,  
Slain by his own hands, an inanimate corse.—  
But I, alas ! am I then less than he  
Disconsolate as a father ? And is this life,  
This state, in which, amid atrocious furies,  
The frantic Myrrha languishes ? This life,  
To which we're doom'd by her mysterious pangs ?—  
Yet will I question her ; and I have arm'd  
My heart in iron mail. She well deserves  
(And this she knows) my anger ; as a proof  
She tardily obeys my summons hither :  
Yet my command hath she already heard  
By the third messenger.—Assuredly  
Beneath these pangs of her's there is conceal'd  
Some mystery no less dreadful than important.  
I, from her lips, will now hear all the truth,  
Or never, never more will I henceforth  
Admit her to my presence . . . But, oh heaven,  
If she's condemn'd to everlasting tears,  
Though innocent, by force of destiny,

And by the anger of offended gods,  
Should I to such calamities as these  
Add the displeasure of a father? . . . Should I,  
Despairing, and despised, abandon her  
To lingering death? . . . Alas, at such a thought  
My heart would break . . . But, yet, in part, at least,  
'Tis indispensable that I should hide,  
From her, in this my last experiment,  
My boundless fondness. Never hath she yet  
Heard me address her in reproachful terms :  
No maiden surely hath a heart so firm  
As may suffice to hear without emotion  
The unaccustom'd menace of a father.—  
At length she comes.—Alas, how she approaches  
With tardy and reluctant steps ! It seems  
As if she came to expire before my eyes.

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Cinyras, Myrrha.*

*Cin.* —Myrrha, I never, never could have thought  
That thou regardedst not thy father's honour :  
Thou hast too certainly of this convinced me  
On this day fatal to us all : but yet  
That thou should'st now reluctantly obey  
Th' express repeated summons of thy father,  
E'en this was less expected than the other.

*My.* . . . Thou of my life art arbiter supreme . . .  
I did implore from thee . . . myself . . . awhile . . .  
And on this very spot, . . . the punishment . . .  
Of my so many, . . . and enormous faults . . .  
In the presence of my mother ; . . . wherefore then  
Didst thou not kill me? . . .

*Cin.* It is time, oh Myrrha,  
 Yes it is time to alter thy deportment.  
 In vain thou utterest accents of despair;  
 In vain despairing, and confounded looks  
 Thou fixest on the ground. Through all thy grief  
 Alas, too evidently shame appears;  
 Guilty thou feel'st thyself. Thy heaviest fault  
 Is thy concealment with thy father: hence  
 His anger thoroughly thou meritest;  
 And that the partial and indulgent love  
 I bore to thee, my dear and only daughter,  
 Henceforth should cease.—But what? thy tears gush  
 forth!

Thou tremblest! shudderest! . . . and thou art silent!  
 Would then thy father's anger be to thee  
 An insupportable infliction?

*My.* Ah! . . .

Worse, . . . than the worst of deaths . . .

*Cin.* Hear me.—Thou hast  
 Render'd thy parents, as thou hast thyself,  
 A fable to the world, by th' untoward issue  
 To which thou'st brought these rites desired by thee.  
 Thy cruel insult has cut short already  
 The days of wretched Pereus . . .

*My.* What do I hear?

*Cin.* Yes, Pereus dies; and thou hast murder'd  
 him.

Soon as he left our presence, he withdrew,  
 Alone, and by mute anguish overwhelm'd,  
 To his apartments: no man durst pursue him;  
 And I arrived too late . . . He lay, transfix'd  
 By his own dagger, in a sea of blood:  
 To me, his eyes bedimm'd with tears, and death,

He raised; . . . and, 'mid his latest sighs, he breathed  
The name of Myrrha from his lips.—Ungrateful . . .

*My.* Ah, say no more to me . . . I, I alone  
Deserve to breathe my last . . . And yet I live? . . .

*Cin.* The horrid anguish of the wretched sire  
Of Pereus, I alone can comprehend,  
I who at once am wretched and a father :  
Hence I'm aware what now must be his rage,  
His hatred, and his thirst to wreak on us  
A just and bitter vengeance.—Hence, not moved  
By terror of his arms, but by a just  
Compassion for his son, I am resolved  
To know from thee, as doth befit a father  
Offended and deceived, (and at all risks  
Do I insist on this) the real cause  
Of such a horrible catastrophe.—  
Myrrha, in vain would'st thou conceal it from me :  
Thou by thy each least gesture art betray'd.—  
Thy broken words ; the changes of thy face,  
Now dyed with scarlet, and with hues of death  
Now blanch'd ; thy mute and bosom-heaving sighs ;  
The lingering hectic that consumes thy frame ;  
Thy restless glances stol'n and indirect ;  
Thy dumb confusion ; and the cleaving shame,  
Th' instinctive consciousness that ne'er forsakes  
thee : . . .

Ah ! all that I behold in thee persuades me,  
And ineffectually would'st thou deny it,  
That these thy furies are th' effects of love.

*My.* Of love? . . . Ah, think it not ! . . . Thou art  
deceived.

*Cin.* The more that thou deniest it, the more

I am convinced of this. And I, alas!  
Am but too well assured, that this thy flame,  
Which thou so pertinaciously dost hide,  
To some degrading object owes its birth.

*My.* Alas! . . . why thus deliberate? . . . Thou wilt  
not  
Destroy me with thy sword; . . . and thou mean-  
while . . .

Destroyest me with words . . .

*Cin.* And darest thou  
Assert to me that thou'rt untouch'd by love?  
And should'st thou say it to me, and e'en dare  
Also to swear it, I should deem thee perjured.—  
And who is ever worthy of thy heart,  
If Pereus, true, incomparable lover,  
Could not indeed obtain it?—But so fierce  
Are thy emotions; . . . such thy agitation;  
So conscious and so passionate thy shame;  
And in such terrible vicissitudes  
The conflict of these passions is engraved  
Upon thy countenance, that all in vain  
Thy lips deny the charge . . .

*My.* Ah, would'st thou then . . .  
E'en in thy presence . . . make me . . . die . . . of  
shame? . . .

And thou art a father? . . .

*Cin.* And would'st thou with cruel,  
Inflexible, and unavailing silence,  
Poison, and prematurely terminate  
The days of a fond father who loves thee  
Far better than himself—I'm yet a father:  
Banish thy fear; whatever be thy love,  
(So that I once might see thee happy) I,



If thou confess it to me, for thy sake,  
 Am capable of any sacrifice.  
 I have seen, and I still see (*wretched daughter*)  
 The struggle generous and horrible  
 Which tears thy heart to pieces betwixt love  
 And duty. Thou hast done too much already,  
 To sense of right self-sacrificed, but love,  
 More powerful than thyself, forbids the offering.  
 Passion may be excused; its impulses  
 Oft foil our best endeavours to resist them;  
 But to withhold thy secret from thy father,  
 Who prays for, who commands, thy confidence,  
 Admits of no excuse.

*My.* —Oh death! oh death!  
 Whom I so much invoke, wilt thou still be  
 Deaf to my grief? . . .

*Cin.* Ah daughter, try to calm,  
 Ah try to calm thy heart: if thou wilt not  
 Make me hereafter more incensed against thee,  
 I am already almost pacified;  
 Provided thou wilt speak to me.—Ah speak  
 To me, as to a brother. Even I  
 Love by experience know: . . . The name . . .

*My.* Oh heaven! . . .  
 I love, yes; since thou forcest me to say it;  
 I desperately love, and love in vain.  
 But who's the object of that hopeless passion,  
 Nor thou, nor any one, shall ever know:  
 He knows it not himself . . . and even I  
 To my own consciousness almost deny  
 The fatal secret.

*Cin.* And I will, and ought

To wrest it from thy keeping. Nor canst thou  
Be cruel to thyself, except thou be  
At the same time still more so to thy parents,  
Who thee adore, thee only.—Speak, ah speak.—  
Thou seest already from an angry father  
That I become a weeping, kneeling suppliant :  
Thou canst not die without condemning us  
To share thy tomb.—He, whosoe'er he be,  
Whom thou dost love, I will that he be thine.  
A monarch's foolish pride can never tear  
The affection of a father from my breast.  
Thy love, thy hand, my realm, may well convert  
The lowest individual to a rank  
Lofty and noble : and I feel assured  
That he whom thou could'st love, could never be  
Wholly unworthy, though of humble birth.  
I do conjure thee, speak : at all events,  
I wish thee saved.

*My.* Saved ? . . . Of what dost thou dream ? . . .  
These very words accelerate my death . . .  
Let me, for pity's sake, ah let me quickly  
For ever . . . drag myself . . . from thee . . .

*Cin.* Oh daughter  
Sole, and beloved ; Oh what say'st thou ? Ah !  
Come to thy father's arms.—Oh heaven ! Like one  
Distract, and frantic, thou repellst me ?  
Thou then dost hate thy father ? and dost thou  
Burn with so vile a passion that thou fearest . . .

*My.* Ah no, it is not vile ; . . . my flame is guilty ;  
Nor ever . . .

*Cin.* What is this thou sayest ? . . . Guilty ?  
Provided that thy sire condemn it not,

It cannot be : reveal it.

*My.* Thou would'st see  
Even that sire himself with horror shudder,  
If it were known to . . . *Cinyras* . . .

*Cin.* What do I hear ?

*My.* What have I said ? . . . Alas ! . . .  
I know not what I say . . . I do not love . . .  
Ah, think it not ; oh no ! . . . Ah, suffer me,  
I for the last time fervently conjure thee  
To hasten from thy presence.

*Cin.* Hard of heart ! . . .

Now, by exasperating thus my rage  
With thy fantastic moods, by trifling thus  
With my excessive grief, eternally  
Now hast thou forfeited thy father's love.

*My.* Oh cruel, bitter, and ferocious menace ! . .  
Now in the anguish of my dying gasp,  
Swiftly approaching . . . to my pangs so dire,  
So various, and so fierce, will now be added  
The cruel execration of a father ! . . .  
I shall die far from thee . . . and die unpitied ! . . .  
How fortunate my mother ! . . . She, at least,  
Press'd in thy arms . . . may breathe . . . her latest  
sigh . . .

*Cin.* What would'st thou say to me ? . . . What  
dreadful light  
Breaks from these words ! . . . Thou impious, per-  
chance . . .

*My.* Oh heaven ! . . . what have I said indeed ? . . .  
Alas !

Oh wretched me ! . . . Where am I ? . . . Whither now  
Shall I betake myself ? Where shall I die ?—

But now thy dagger may bestead me! . . .<sup>1</sup>

*Cin.* Daughter! . . .

What hast thou done? My dagger . . .

*My.* Lo! . . . to thee . . .

I now restore it . . . I at least possess'd

A hand as swift and desperate as my tongue.

*Cin.* I'm petrified . . . with fear . . . and agony,  
With pity . . . and with rage . . .

*My.* Oh Cinyras! . . .

Thou . . . seest me . . . now . . . expiring . . . in thy presence . . .

I have . . . at once . . . succeeded . . . to avenge

Thee . . . and myself . . . to punish . . . —Thou thyself, . . .

By dint of violence, . . . from my heart . . . didst wrest . . .

The horrid secret . . . But since . . . with my life . . .

It parted . . . from my lips, . . . I die . . . less guilty . . .

*Cin.* Oh crime! . . . oh agony! —To whom my tears? —

*My.* Ah, weep not thou; . . . I merit not thy tears . . .  
Shun my contagious presence; . . . and conceal . . .  
From Cecris . . . ever . . .

*Cin.* Wretchedest of fathers! . . .

And does the gaping earth not burst asunder

To swallow me alive? . . . I dare not now

Approach the dying and flagitious damsel; . . .

Yet how can I abandon utterly

My immolated daughter? . . .

<sup>1</sup> She suddenly seizes the dagger of her father, and stabs herself with it.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Cecris, Euryclea, Cinyras, Myrrha.*

*Ce.* By the shrieks  
Of death brought hither ..

*Cin.* Do not thou advance ...<sup>2</sup>  
Oh heaven ! ..

*Ce.* To my daughter's side ..

*My.* Oh voice ! ..

*Eu.* Ah spectacle of horror ! On the earth  
Myrrha lies weltering in her blood ! ..

*Ce.* My daughter ! ..

*Cen.* Stop.

*Ce.* Murder'd ! .. How ? By whom ? .. I will behold her ..

*Cin.* Ah stop, .. and hear with terror .. By my dagger

She, with her own hand, has transpierced herself ..

*Ce.* And dost thou thus desert thy daughter ? .. Ah !  
I will myself ..

*Cin.* She is no more our daughter.  
With an incestuous and horrid love  
She burn'd for .. Cinyras ..

*Ce.* What do I hear ?—  
Oh crime ! ..

*Cin.* Ah come ! I pray thee let us go,  
To die with agony and shame elsewhere.

*Ce.* Impious ! ..—Oh daughter !

---

<sup>2</sup> He runs to meet Cecris, and preventing her from advancing, he intercepts from her the sight of Myrrha dying.

*Cin.* Ah come! ..

*Ce.* Ah unhappy! ..

Nor ever more embrace her! ..<sup>2</sup>

## SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Myrrha, Euryclea.*

*My.* When I ask'd ..

It .. of thee, .. thou, .. oh Euryclea, .. then ..

Shouldest .. have given .. to my hands .. a sword: ..

I had died .. guiltless; .. guilty .. now .. I die!

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<sup>2</sup> She is dragged away by Clytas.

# THE SECOND BRUTUS.

## A TRAGEDY.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CÆSAR.	CIMBER.
ANTHONY.	<i>People.</i>
CICERO.	<i>Senators.</i>
BRUTUS.	<i>Conspirators.</i>
CASSIUS.	<i>Lictors.</i>

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SCENE,—The Temple of Concord; afterwards the  
Curia of Pompey, in Rome.

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### ACT THE FIRST.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cæsar, Anthony, Cicero, Brutus, Cassius, Cimber,  
Senators, all seated.*

*Cæ.* The dictator of Rome, illustrious fathers,  
To an assembly summons you to-day.  
'Tis true, that Cæsar seldom hitherto  
Hath thus collected you: the cause of this  
Alone hath risen from our common foes,  
Who would not suffer me to quit my arms  
Till I had first discomfited their ranks  
With indefatigable promptitude,  
E'en from the Betis to Egyptian Nile.  
At length 'tis granted to me to enjoy

The privilege, which, more than all things else,  
I coveted, in Rome to avail myself  
Of Roman sense ; and having first restored  
Rome to herself, to take advice from you  
Touching her welfare.—She, from civil broils  
At length is respited ; and now 'tis time  
That every citizen on Tyber's banks  
Should reassume his rights ; and hence I hope  
That envious calumny may cease to rail.  
Rome is not, no, (as lying fame reports,)  
In any wise impair'd : at her sole name,  
Betwixt the Tagus and Euphrates, 'twixt  
The adust Siena and the ultimate,  
Unknown, sequester'd, hyperborean isle  
Of Albion, at her name all nations tremble.  
And since o'er Crassus he has been victorious,  
Far more the Parthian fears ; the Parthian,  
Which at his victory, unlook'd-for, stands  
In blank astonishment, and fearing for it  
Chastisement from yourselves. To consummate  
Rome's glory, nothing else is wanting now  
Except to shew to Parthia and the world,  
That *there* those Roman soldiers (who required  
A Roman leader by the thirst of conquest,  
And not of *gold*, impell'd) were only *slain*,  
And not *subdued*. To wipe off this disgrace,  
And to conduct to Rome the Parthian king  
In fetters bound, or in the attempt to die,  
I now address myself. To treat maturely  
Of such a war, I have assembled you,  
Here, in this temple of auspicious name :  
May we infer from it a joyful omen ;  
Yes, unanimity among us all



Will be the only and authentic pledge  
Of our success. Wherefore do I exhort  
And counsel you to this. Our country's honour  
Summons us thither with imperious voice,  
Where her unconquer'd eagles have received  
Intolerable insult : and that honour  
Doth for the present absolutely silence  
All lesser impulses of every heart.  
The multitude collected in the forum  
Burns for revenge ; from thence may each of us  
Their imprecations hear ; from us they seek,  
And will perforce obtain it, punishment  
On the presumptuous Parthians. Hence should we,  
Waving all other subjects, first resolve  
How best this punishment may be inflicted.  
I first then challenge, from the flower of Rome,  
(And with a Roman joy I see that challenge  
Accepted almost ere it is promulged,)   
That hearty and unanimous consent,  
From whose reverberation speedily  
Each foe of Rome will be dispersed or slain.

*Cim.* With so much wonder is my heart o'er-  
whelm'd,

Hearing of this unanimous consent,  
That I first answer here, though I infringe  
Rigid prescription, younger than so many.  
To us to-day then, who have been already  
Mute by compulsion for so many years,  
To us is liberty of speech to-day  
Restored. I first then will attempt to speak ;  
I, who beheld great Cato in my arms  
In Utica expire. Ah, were my thoughts  
Equal to his ! If not in loftiness,

They may be similar in brevity.  
Other abuses, other enemies,  
And other wrongs, far less endurable,  
Ere Rome bestows a thought upon the Parthians,  
She ought to punish first. The massacres  
Of Rome, e'en from the Gracchi to this time,  
Would furnish matter for a copious tale.  
Her forum and her temples, Rome has seen  
Her dwellings not less sacred, whelm'd in blood :  
With this is Italy, with this her seas  
Are all defiled. What portion is there now  
Of Rome's vast empire with the waste of blood  
Not reeking ? Is this by the Parthians spill'd ?—  
The formerly good citizens are changed  
To butchering ruffians ; to atrocious swords  
The necessary ploughs ; the sacred laws  
To chains and implements of punishment ;  
The generals to ferocious despots : thus  
What more remains to suffer ? what to fear ?  
I then assert, that, to their pristine state,  
Ere aught is done, all things should be restored ;  
And Rome should be regenerate ere avenged.  
An easy process to her genuine sons.

*An.* I, consul, speak ; to me it now belongs :  
Let him not speak, or if he speak be heard,  
Who to the idle winds doth bellow forth  
His pompous imbecillities.—Oh fathers,  
In that which our invincible dictator  
Proposes to us now, 'tis my opinion  
( Although for private ends he may propose it )  
It is not so much question to restore  
Rome to its pristine glory, as to urge  
To that on which the safety, power of Rome,

In short her very being doth depend.  
Did e'er a Roman leader unavenged  
In battle fall? Did e'er our ancestors  
Endure the opprobrium of an adverse battle  
Without retaliation? Hostile heads  
By thousands and by thousands did they not  
Atone, cut off for every Roman corse?  
Shall Rome now suffer that, since the confines  
Of earth and her supremacy are one,  
Which she would ne'er endure when limited  
Within the boundaries of Italy?  
And to her glory grant that she were deaf;  
Grant that we suffered with impunity  
The Parthian tribes their victory to enjoy;  
From such a precedent what obloquy,  
And more, what injury, would not accrue  
To Rome?—A numerous and a warlike people  
Dwell 'twixt the Parthian frontiers and our own.  
Who, who would bridle them, if it should cease,  
The salutary terror of our arms?  
Germany, Greece, Illyria, Macedon,  
Gaul, Britain, Africa, Iberia, Egypt,  
These martial tribes, which outraged and o'ercome,  
On every side surround us; would they serve  
Unwarlike Rome? No, not a day, . . . an hour!  
Imperiously, besides your honour, then,  
An incontestible necessity  
Impels to Asia, to make war against it,  
Our haughty eagles. For the enterprize  
It now alone remains to chuse the leader.  
But who would venture to propose himself  
In Cæsar's presence? Let us chuse another,  
On the condition, that in conquests, he,

In finish'd wars, in victories, in triumphs,  
Surpasses Cæsar, or that he alone  
In battle equals him. Of what avail  
Is creeping envy? Cæsar, now, and Rome,  
Are but one object by two names express'd;  
Since Cæsar doth alone for Rome assert,  
For Rome maintain, the empire of the world.  
Then he is now his country's open foe,  
And a base miscreant, who would dare prefer,  
Envious, his private ends, minute and abject,  
To the common greatness and security.

*Cas.* I am that miscreant then, yes, I am he,  
Whom he, that is a traitor, calls a traitor.  
I am the first to be so; 'tis my boast;  
Since Cæsar now and Rome are but one thing  
Call'd by two names. Who to the purpose speaks,  
Speaks briefly. Others let them here repeat,  
In servile, artful, and unmeaning accents,  
The name of country: if there now remain  
For us a country, to the senators  
It doth belong over her state to watch:  
This in their name do I asseverate;  
But to true senators; and not like these,  
Convened fortuitously; for a vain form  
Summon'd to ridicule; and not like these  
Intimidated and encircled round  
By bullies and bribed satellites; and not  
Almost beheld and heard by citizens  
Bought and corrupted by their demagogues,  
Who feed them with vain words. Is this a people?  
This, that no other liberty esteems  
Or knows, except to be an obstacle  
To all that's great and good, to be a shield  
To all abuse? We now are told to look

Amid the gladiatorial spectacles,  
Or from the tribute of corn-bearing Egypt,  
For Rome's lost majesty. From such a race  
First may we see the senate purged, and then  
May each of us be heard. My sentiments  
Meanwhile I think it fitting to premise ;  
And 'tis, that there should be no dictator,  
Since we are not at war ; that there should be  
Just consuls chosen ; a just senate form'd ;  
And that the forum should again behold  
Just people and authentic tribunes. Then  
Rome may deliberate on the Parthian war ;  
Then, when by symptoms manifest, once more  
Rome by true Romans may be recognized.  
While of her former state we see a shadow,  
Her true and few remaining sons for her  
Will loyally to the utmost of their power  
Exert themselves, now her so many foes  
'Gainst her to the utmost of their power are leagued.

*Cic.* A son, and not ungrateful son, of Rome,  
More than myself I love her : and that day  
When from the impious hand of Catiline  
I rescued her, Rome hail'd me as her father.  
Remembering this, the sweet tears yet I feel  
Of gratitude and tenderness suffuse  
My swimming eyes. The public happiness,  
True peace, and liberty, have ever been,  
And are, my wish. Could I for Rome alone,  
And as I've always lived for her, expire !  
Oh what will be my gain, if for her sake  
Consumed, this remnant of a painful life  
I to her peace devote ! I speak sincerely ;  
My hoary hairs may well obtain belief.  
My language doth not tend to exasperate

Him on the one hand, whom disdain, though just,  
 Already has enough in soul embitter'd,  
 From many and long-suffer'd injuries ;  
 Nor, on the other hand, to adulate  
 The already sovereign arrogance of him  
 Who deems himself without competitor.  
 I speak to reconcile the good of Rome  
 (If it be possible) with that of all.  
 We have already for a long time seen  
 The ill effects among us of the sword,  
 Unholy laid bare. The names alone  
 Of the ringleaders who infringed the laws  
 Were changed, their aim unvarying, and each one  
 Added to the accumulating ills  
 Of the oppress'd republic. Who among us  
 Sincerely loves his country ; who in heart,  
 Not in words only, is a citizen ;  
 Now my example let him imitate.  
 Amid the rancour, hidden and profound,  
 The manifest atrocious enmities ;  
 Amid the brandish'd swords, (if once again  
 The raging furies venture to unsheathe them,)  
 Let each of us expose his breast unarm'd.  
 Thus will these frantic and discordant spirits  
 Be laid at rest, or we alone shall fall  
 Slain by their cruel swords ; to their disgrace,  
 Sole, genuine Romans, we.—These are the thoughts,  
 The aspirations, and the prayers are these  
 Of one, a Roman citizen : do ye  
 All listen to him equally : and who  
 With too much glory is already laden,  
 Let him not tarnish it, or lose it quite,  
 By trying to no purpose to gain more :

And who with envy sees another's glory,  
Let him remember that not envious thoughts,  
But lofty emulation in the contest  
Of real virtue, can alone augment  
His own pretensions, and without a stain,  
And laudably, diminish those of others.  
But since at home there doth so much remain  
To occupy our thoughts, I deem that we  
Ought, for the present, to let Parthian wars  
To nearer interests yield. Ah, may Rome be  
Harmonious by our means, and recomposed !  
And may the Parthians at one glance from her,  
And whate'er foreign foes she may possess,  
All disappear, like clouds before the wind.

*Bru.* Cimber, and Cassius, and great Cicero,  
Their lofty Roman sentiments, so like  
True Romans have announced, that nought remains  
For him succeeding them to say of Rome.  
Nought now remains except to speak of him  
Who in himself has centred Rome, and now  
E'en deigns not to dissemble it.—To thee,  
Cæsar, since Rome in thee alone exists,  
I of thyself will speak, and not of Rome.  
I love thee not, and this thou knowest, thou  
Who lov'st not Rome ; sole cause I do not love thee :  
I do not envy thee, because no more  
I deem myself inferior to thee,  
Since thou'rt become inferior to thyself :  
I do not fear thee, Cæsar, since I'm always  
Ready to die rather than be a slave ;  
And, finally, I hate thee not, because  
In nothing do I fear thee.—Now then, hear  
Brutus alone ; to him alone yield faith ;

Not to thy servile consul, who so long  
By the reflection of thy virtues stands,  
While he with thee thy vices only shares,  
And seconds and augments them. Thou, oh Cæsar,  
Perhaps yet deservest to be saved ; ( I think so ; )  
And I would have it so ; since thou so much,  
Wert thou reform'd, might'st benefit thy country :  
Yes, thou may'st do it, as thou hast been able  
To injure her so grievously already.  
This thy own people, ( Cassius hath erewhile  
Pourtray'd it to the life, ) this thy own people,  
A few days since, did somewhat disenchant  
Thy visions of supreme authority.  
Thou heard'st the cries of popular indignation,  
That day when, as in sport, the majesty  
Of the new consul gallantly attempted  
To round thy forehead with the royal wreath.  
Thou heard'st all shudder ; and thy regal rage  
Blanch'd thy fierce countenance. But by thy hand  
The bauble was repell'd, which, in thy heart,  
Thou didst so ardently desire : from hence  
Thou wert assail'd with universal plaudits.  
But these same acclamations of thy people,  
Which, though in truth not really Roman, were not  
Infatuate as thou hadst wished them,  
Infix'd a mortal anguish in thy breast.  
That Rome might have a short-lived tyranny,  
Thou that day learnedst, but a king . . . no, never !  
Thou know'st too clearly for thy inward peace,  
That thou art not a citizen : and yet,  
I also see it, that it weighs upon thee  
To be a tyrant ; and for this, I think,  
Thou wert not born : thou see'st now if I hate thee.



Reveal thou quickly then, if thou dost know it,  
To us and to thyself, that which thou think'st,  
That which thou hop'st to be. And learn thou now,  
If thou dost know it not, thou dictator,  
Learn from a citizen, from Brutus learn,  
That which thou meritest to be. Oh Cæsar,  
A ministration far more glorious  
Than that which thou assumest doth await thee.  
Tyrant of Rome thou covetest to be;  
Presume, and thou shalt certainly succeed,  
To announce thyself as her deliverer.—  
Thou, by the freedom with which Brutus speaks,  
May'st clearly apprehend, that if of us  
Thou deem'st thyself lord paramount, as yet  
The bond of *my* allegiance is not seal'd.

*An.* Of thy rash insolence ere long I swear  
The punishment . . .

*Cæ.* Let this suffice.—So long,  
In hearing you with silence, have I given  
Of my forbearance no slight specimen:  
And should I hold myself of all things here  
The master, 'twould not misbecome me now;  
Since I with patience have not only dared  
To hear, but have provoked, th' audacity  
Of reprehensive tongues. Yet to yourselves  
This consultation seems not free enough;  
Although you have assail'd the dictator  
With insults, which he might or might not hear.  
I in the court of Pompey then invite you,  
Far from the forum, by to-morrow's dawn,  
To a more free debate, and without arm'd  
Attendants to defend you from the people.  
There, more at length, words more insulting yet,

And more reproachful, shall I hear from you :  
But there too must the Parthians' destiny  
Be finally resolved.—If it seem meet  
To the majority, that Cæsar's fate  
Be also there determined, I dissent not,  
Provided that majority decrees it.

## ACT THE SECOND.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cicero, Cimber.*

*Cic.* There does not now remain a safe asylum  
Save this, where we may treat o' the fate of Rome.

*Cim.* Ah ! little now is left for us to say ;  
Actions alone remain for us. I have  
Invited hither to us in thy name  
Brutus and Cassius ; soon will they be here.  
The exigence admits of no delay ;  
Our country by to-morrow's rising sun  
Too certainly, alas ! will undergo  
The last extreme of danger.

*Cic.* 'Tis most true  
That the secure audacity of Cæsar,  
Allowing no more to his vile designs  
Any delay, doth render on our part  
Further delay impossible. At length  
For nought he wishes but his troops in arms ;  
Since from experience he is convinced  
That universal terror will do more  
To further his attempts, than the bribed love  
Of the unstable people. In his heart  
He laughs at our misfortunes ; and lets us

At leisure rail, provided he obtain  
His army : and of this he is secure  
From the majority of votes which he  
Has purchased in the senate. Afterwards  
At his return he'll be avenged on us  
For our last efforts in the cause of freedom  
His warriors he marches to the Parthians,  
To give the last shock to expiring Rome  
At his return, as formerly he gave  
To her, returning from the Rhine, the first.  
He hath advanced too far now to retract :  
Now even I confess that we cannot  
Longer delay with safety. But, alas !  
As a good citizen should do, I tremble :  
I shudder, to reflect, that, on an hour  
Fleeting, perchance, as that of our debate,  
The fate of Rome depends.

*Cim.* Behold to us  
Cassius repairs.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Cassius, Cicero, Cimber.*

*Cas.* Have I come late ? But ah,  
Brutus is not yet here.

*Cim.* He comes ere long.

*Cas.* Here many of our friends would follow me :  
But in these melancholy walls, are spies  
So much more numerous than good citizens,  
That, all suspicion wholly to prevent,  
I rather chose to come here unattended.  
To the unbending rectitude of Cimber,  
To Cicero's perspicuous intellect,

Lastly to my implacable revenge,  
'Twere now sufficient could we only add  
The sublime energy of Brutus' rage.  
Can e'er another council be convened  
Of nobler temperament than this, and hence  
Better adapted to exert itself  
For Rome's prosperity?

*Cic.* Ah! may the Gods  
That watch o'er Rome will that it thus may prove!  
I, far as in me lies, do hold myself  
With hand, voice, heart, ready to serve my country.  
And I regret that there remains to me  
But a weak remnant of declining years  
To sacrifice for her. My wasted strength  
Can with my hand but little serve her cause;  
But if this tongue hath ever in the forum  
Or in the senate, the high sentiments  
Of freedom utter'd; more than ever yet,  
On this day Rome shall hear me thunder forth  
The same high sentiments of freedom: Rome,  
Whom I will not a single day survive,  
If she is doom'd to fall amid her chains.

*Cas.* Thou always wert the sincere orator  
Of liberty; and by thy eloquence hath Rome  
Oft from her abject lethargy been roused:  
But who remains now that deserves to hear thee?  
All now are apprehensive, or are bribed;  
Nor, if they heard them, could they comprehend  
Thy elevated sentiments...

*Cic.* The people,  
Though no more Roman, is a people still:  
And though each man be in himself debased  
As far as man can be, the greater part,

Soon as the multitude collects, is changed :  
I further would assert, that we may give them,  
When in the forum they're assembled all,  
A spirit altogether different  
From that which each 'mid his own Lares feels.  
Truth, falsehood, anger, pity, reason, grief,  
Justice, and honour, glory even yet,  
Are impulses, which, by the man who has them  
All truly in his heart, as on his lips,  
May be, yes all of them, at will transfused  
(Whate'er their individual character)  
Into the hearts of congregated thousands.  
I hope to-day to ascend, and not in vain,  
The rostrum, if indignant eloquence,  
Fervid and free, may aught avail ; and there,  
If it be needful, I'm resolved to die.  
Say on what base was that prodigious power  
Of Cæsar founded, which we all now fear ?  
Th' opinion of the many. With the sword,  
'Tis true, he conquer'd Gaul, but with his tongue,  
With plausible insinuating words,  
First o'er his legions the ascendancy  
He gain'd, and o'er the people then in part :  
He could not purchase, or exterminate all,  
He only : but he easily could make,  
All those whom he had first inveigled, slaves.  
And cannot we then equally with him  
Make language instrumental to our purpose ?  
Cannot we undeceive, illuminate,  
And medicate the heart and intellect  
Of all our fellow citizens ? The truth,  
In such a contest, 'twixt my eloquence,  
And that of the tyrannical dictator,

The truth would be on my side, force on his.  
 And in the noble drift of my discourse  
 Do I so much confide, that if but once  
 I gain a hearing, I his weapons scorn.  
 To hearts and ears that have been Roman once,  
 Such fervid language I may yet address,  
 That for a while at least they may become  
 Romans once more. The character of Cæsar  
 Fully disclosed, and Cæsar is no more.

*Cim.* There is no doubt, but that if Rome could  
 hear thee,

Thy manly speech might rouse her to new life :  
 But if thou also generously chose  
 To ascend alone, and die upon the rostrum,  
 For now to him 'tis fatal who dare breathe  
 The name of freedom thence ; if also thou  
 Dared to do this alone ; by the infamous,  
 And purchased howlings of base parasites  
 All means of being heard would be cut off.  
 Those wretches now exclusively possess  
 The bar of eloquence, and banish thence  
 All upright orators. On Tyber's banks  
 Rome stands no longer : it behoves us now  
 In the remotest provinces to seek  
 For arms, for virtues, and for citizens.  
 A dire necessity, and this alone,  
 Could justify us in recurring now  
 T' intestine war ; but yet this is not peace.  
 We are compell'd once more with blood to purge  
 Those rankling humours, which, oppressing Rome,  
 Keep her exanimate 'twixt life and death.  
 The illustrious Cato was a real Roman,  
 And he detested uselessly to shed

The blood of citizens : yet that most just  
Among just men, profess'd, that, " nursed in arms,  
And now by arms exhausted, arms alone  
Can now regenerate Rome." What else remains  
For us to do ? Or Rome is overcome,  
And with her fall all her true citizens ;  
Or she's victorious, and the guilty ones  
Are all dispersed, annihilate, or changed.  
Has Cæsar quite chain'd victory to his car ?  
Let him be only once discomfited,  
And e'en his very partizans, convinced  
That he is not invincible, will then  
With other eyes behold him ; with one voice  
All will then dare to execrate his name,  
And, as an impious tyrant, to proscribe him.

*Cas.* Why first by us should he not be proscribed ?  
When we ourselves should give it, when ourselves  
Should be the first to execute the sentence,  
From a vile populace should we expect it ?  
While at our will, e'en in the midst of Rome,  
Within her dwellings, in the very senate,  
We may thus cope with Cæsar, and obtain  
O'er him a complete victory ; in the camp,  
Ought he, and at the risk of many lives  
Less impious than his own, to be provoked  
By us to dangerous and uncertain fight,  
Perhaps to be the victor ?—Where a sword,  
This sword of mine alone, and this my fierce,  
Inexorable rage that makes me wield it,  
Suffice, more than suffice, to annihilate  
That despicable life, which holds all Rome  
In tears, unworthily enslaved and chain'd ;  
Where nought is wanting to destroy the tyrant

Whoe'er he be, except a *single* sword,  
 And one, a Roman, that may brandish it ;  
 Wherefore should we unsheathe so many?—Ah !  
 Let others sit in council, weigh, discuss,  
 Delay, and waver till they miss the time :  
 I, among all schemes, deem the briefest best ;  
 And now especially since the most brief  
 Will be the boldest, noblest, and most sure.  
 Worthy it is of Rome to slay this one  
 Openly ; and by the hand of Cassius  
 Cæsar deserves to die. To the just rage  
 Of other men I leave the punishment  
 Of th' infamous slave—consul Anthony.—  
 Lo, Brutus comes : ah, let us, let us hear,  
 If he dissents from me.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Brutus, Cicero, Cassius, Cimber.*

*Cic.* Does Brutus come  
 So late to such a lofty conference? . . .

*Bru.* Ah ! I had been the first there, if erewhile  
 I had not been prevented . . .

*Cim.* And by whom?

*Bru.* Not one of you could guess.—'Twas An-  
 thony  
 That would at length address me.

*Cic.* Anthony !

*Cas.* And the vile satellite of Cæsar gain'd  
 An audience from Brutus ?

*Bru.* Yes, he gain'd it,  
 And in his Cæsar's name. He would confer  
 With me, at all events ; and he invites me,



If I consent to it, to come to him ;  
Or he to me . . .

*Cim.* His offer was rejected ? . . .

*Bru.* No. Caesar as a friend, in my pure heart  
Wakes no more fear, than Caesar as a foe.  
Hence I will hear him, and ere long, and in  
This very temple.

*Cas.* What can be his wish ?

*Bru.* Perhaps, to bribe me.—But ye still, I hope,  
Confide in Brutus.

*Cas.* More than in ourselves.

*Cim.* In Brutus all confide ; e'en the most vile :

*Bru.* And to provoke me, in respect of deeds,  
(As if I slept) I met with on my road  
Exciting exhortations scatter'd round me,  
Strong, brief, and Roman ; and at once expressive  
Of praise and blame towards me, as if I were  
Slow to do that which Rome expected of me.  
This I am not : and every stimulus  
Applied to me is idle.

*Cas.* But, I pray thee,  
What hop'st thou from this interview with Caesar ?

*Cic.* Thou hop'st perhaps to change him . . .

*Bru.* I am pleased  
That the sagacity of the great Cicero,  
My scheme in part conjectures.

*Cas.* Oh ! what say'st thou ?

We all, long time expecting thee, have here  
At length express'd our sentiments : we all,  
In hating Cæsar, and in loving Rome,  
In being willing for her sake to die,  
Were as one man : the end of all the same.  
But in the best means to obtain that end

Our sentiments were threefold. To resort  
To legislative strife ; to rouse from sleep  
The people, by imposture drugg'd, to arms ;  
Or with the private sword to immolate  
Cæsar in Rome ; now which of these would be  
The choice of Brutus ?

*Bru.* Mine ?—Not one of these  
At present. If mine afterwards proved vain,  
I would undoubtedly adopt the last.

*Cas.* And thine ?—What other then remains to us ?

*Bru.* To you I'm known : I am not wont to speak  
In vain ; be pleased to hear me.—Rome is now  
Far too infirm to be in one day cured.  
The people might be roused, but briefly roused,  
To virtue : never with the bait of gold  
Are they, as they are drawn to baseness, drawn  
To rectitude. Can real excellence  
Be ever purchased ? The corrupted people  
Would form a treacherous basis for fresh freedom.  
Perhaps the senators are less infected ?  
One may enumerate the upright ones ;  
The guilty also in their hearts hate Cæsar,  
Not because he robs all of liberty ;  
But because he prevents, (a single tyrant,)  
Their being tyrants in their turn. To him  
They would succeed ; they envy, hence, and hate  
him.

*Cic.* Ah, were this not, as 'tis indeed, too true !

*Bru.* Amid such vices the good citizen  
Should steer with care, lest he to bad add worse.  
Cæsar, though now a tyrant, was not once so.  
The impious wish to be lord paramount  
Hath only lately risen in his heart :

And the vile Anthony, by stratagems,  
Adds fuel to his flame, to drag him on  
To his perdition, that he thus may rise  
Upon his ruin'd fortunes. Friends like these  
Fall to the lot of tyrants.

*Cas.* In his breast,  
Connatural with his being, evermore  
Cæsar possess'd the thirst to be supreme.

*Bru.* No; not to reign supreme: he never dared  
To wish for so much. Now thou deemest him  
More bold, more lofty, than he ever was.  
Ambition, a necessity for fame,  
An ardent spirit, and no lofty wish  
To be avenged on private enemies,  
And lucky opportunity, at last,  
More than aught else, have to that height impell'd  
him,

At which when now arrived, he feels himself  
Astonish'd at his own temerity.  
A thirst for honour more than thirst for power  
Still, in his heart, maintains ascendancy.  
Should I prove this to you? Does he not now  
Pant to attack the Parthians, and to quit  
Rome where he still possesses many foes?

*Cim.* He hopes to purchase with the Parthian  
laurels  
The royal crown.

*Bru.* Then he would rather be  
To valour than to force indebted for it:  
He is thence more ambitious than corrupt...

*Cas.* Dost thou to us pronounce his eulogy?...

*Bru.* Hear the conclusion.—Cæsar wavers still  
Within himself; he wishes yet for fame;

He is not therefore yet, in heart at least,  
Consummately a tyrant : but, he now  
Begins to tremble, and a short time since  
He knew not fear ; He then approaches near  
The brink of tyranny. A few days since  
Terror assail'd him, when he saw the crown  
By his bribed people from his grasp withheld.  
But Cæsar, be he what he may, as yet  
Is not contemptible, is not unworthy  
That others should facilitate for him :  
The path of reformation.—For myself  
I must despise myself, or him esteem,  
Since I consented for the gift of life  
To be indebted to him, on the day  
When, in Pharsalia's fields, a vanquish'd foe,  
Within his power I fell.—I live ; and this  
My life is a sufficient blot to Brutus ;  
But without baseness or ingratitude  
I will devise the means that blot to cancel.

*Cic.* Such often is the fate of war : thou thus  
Hadst also used thy victory o'er him,  
If thou had'st conquer'd. Did not he himself,  
Once as a gift receive that life, to Rome  
Now so disastrous ? Yes, did not he also  
Receive it as a gift from Scylla's hands  
By express grace, and far more express error ?

*Bru.* 'Tis true ; but never does my mind forego  
The recollection of a benefit.

Yet at the same time do my country's claims,  
And my own duties, in my heart sink deep.  
In short, to Brutus, Cæsar such appears,  
That, (as he is, as now from day to day  
He more becomes,) a tyrannous dictator,

Brutus, on no condition, will permit  
His life to be prolong'd ; or he will kill him,  
Or he himself in the attempt will fall . . .  
But such to Brutus, Caesar also seems,  
That he alone to Rome can now restore,  
If he once more become a citizen,  
Liberty, empire, energy, and life.  
He is e'en now the idol of the people;  
Let him become a model to the good;  
Let him against the guilty arm the laws  
With added terrors ; till the whole returns  
To its original state, be all his power  
Concentred to prevent those sons of faction,  
From ruining those laws. He was endow'd  
With lofty thoughts ; he was a citizen :  
For fame he burns yet : he is blinded, yes ;  
But such from prosperous fate, and impious friends,  
Who have alone made him forsake the path  
Of real glory, such from these alone  
Is he become.—Or nothing is my speech,  
Or I shall know how from my breast to draw  
Such strenuous and impressive words, to use  
To him such true, such strong, tremendous reasons,  
And in such numbers use them, that I hope,  
Yes I indulge the hope, to force e'en Caesar ;  
To make him great indeed, so pure in virtue,  
That he o'er every man, o'er every Roman,  
Will rise unparallel'd in excellence,  
Yet be a simple citizen of Rome.—  
I only do prefer his fame to mine,  
Hoping that fame may benefit his country :  
And this my enterprize, methinks, affords  
Convincing proof of my sincerity.—

But, if in vain Brutus speaks now to Cæsar,  
Thou seest it, Cassius, thus I ever wear it;  
Behold the dagger, which will be more swift  
To slay him than thy sword . . .

*Cic.* Oh genuine patriot!

Thou art too great; ill canst thou comprehend  
The tyrant Cæsar, judging from thyself.

*Cas.* Illustrious Brutus, an impossible thing,  
But worthy of thee, thou projectest: one  
Thou only could'st attempt. I oppose not  
Myself to thee. Ah, Cæsar fully can,  
And he alone, divest thee of thy error.  
To change a tyrant to a citizen?

'Tis in itself proof, this thy generous hope,  
Oh Brutus, that thou ne'er could'st be a tyrant.

*Bru.* That will be soon made clear: myself here-  
after

Will give you full account of all my deeds.

If I, a vain, abortive orator,

Oh Cassius, prove; so much more shalt thou have me,  
I swear to thee, obedient to thy orders,  
A lusty and a fierce tyrannicide.

### ACT THE THIRD.

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cæsar, Anthony.*

*An.* Cæsar, yes, soon will Brutus come to thee  
Within this very temple, where erewhile  
Thou didst consent to hear and tolerate  
His arrogant harangues. Ere long shalt thou  
Hear him, since thus thou wilt, as man to man.

*Cæ.* I hold myself for this to thee indebted;  
'Twas not an easy undertaking now  
To persuade Brutus to confer with me;  
Nor had I dared to trust to any one  
Except thyself an embassy like this.

*An.* How much it grieves me, that to my entreaties

Inexorably deaf, thou dost persist  
This Brutus to support! This is the first  
Of all thy wishes, with which Anthony  
Reluctantly complied. Yet in the guise  
Of amity, and in thy name, I stoop'd  
To supplicate him whom I know to be,  
By certain proof, thy mortal enemy,  
And whom as such I utterly abhor.

*Cæ.* Many hate Cæsar; yet, one man alone  
I deem a foe that's worthy of myself:  
And he is Brutus.

*An.* Thence, not Brutus only,  
But Brutus first, the Cassii, and the Cimbri,  
The Tullii, and so many more should die.

*Cæ.* The more embitter'd, lofty, strong my foe,  
So much more pleasure do I always take  
In overcoming him; and oftentimes  
More, than with arms, with pardon have I done this.  
To have recourse to reconciling words,  
When I have power to arbitrate by force;  
Persuade, convince, and captivate a heart  
That swells with hate; to make that man my friend,  
Whose very being I could crush to nought;  
Ah, this against a worthy enemy,  
This is the most illustrious revenge;  
And it is mine.

*An.* Let Cæsar learn to be  
Great from himself alone; nature for this  
Intended him: but how at once to make  
Rome and himself secure, let him be taught  
To-day by him who loves them both alike:  
And above every man, that man am I.  
I ne'er shall cease reminding thee, that if  
Thou slay'st not Brutus, thou art herein check'd  
More by thy vain and individual glory,  
Than by thy real fondness for thy country;  
And that thou manifestest little heed  
For the security of both.

*Cæ.* Would'st thou  
Cæsar intimidate with base suspicion?

*An.* If Cæsar will not for himself, for Rome  
He might, and ought to tremble.

*Cæ.* Cæsar ought  
To die for glory, and for Rome; but never  
To tremble for himself, never for her.  
I in the camp the foes of Rome have conquer'd;  
These were the only enemies of Cæsar.  
'Mong those, who against her the sword unsheathed,  
Was Brutus; I already, arms in hand,  
Have, as a foe, o'ercome him, and e'en then  
With the just sword of war I slew him not;  
Now in the walls of Rome, oh heaven! unarm'd,  
Shall I now cause him to be murder'd, I  
With the insidious and guilty dagger,  
Or with the unjust axe?—There is no cause,  
That ever could to such an outrage goad me:  
And even if I wish'd it; . . . Ah! perhaps . . .  
I could not . . . do it.—But yet finally,  
To my so many triumphs, that o'er Brutus,



That also o'er the Parthians, are wanting :  
The one shall be the instrument to the other.  
I will make Brutus, at all risks, my friend.  
At present more than every other object  
The meditated vengeance for the death  
Of murder'd Crassus, weighs upon my thoughts ;  
And in the enterprise, in which at once  
The fame of Rome and Caesar are involved,  
Brutus may much assist me.

*An.* Thy renown  
Canst thou increase ?

*Cæ.* While there remains aught more  
For me to do, I deem what I have done  
A nothing : such my nature is.—'Gainst Parthia  
An impulse irresistible impels me.  
Shall Rome, while Caesar lives, be ever conquer'd ?  
Ah ! let him perish first a thousand times.  
But while I fight in Asia, I ought not  
To leave the city full of factious spirits,  
And humours rankling and unreconciled ;  
Nor would I leave her full of blood and terror ;  
Though this may be the most effectual means  
To render her submissive.—Brutus only  
Can level all for me . . .

*An.* Then Anthony  
Thou deem'st a thing of nought ?

*Cæ.* —Part of myself  
Art thou in all my military projects :  
Hence at my side still I wish thee to be  
The terror of the Parthians. I propose  
In other ways to avail myself of Brutus.

*An.* I am prepared by every means to serve thee ;  
And this thou knowest. But thou art too blind

As respects Brutus.

*Cæ.* He is far more blind  
As respects me, perchance. But this, I hope,  
Will be the day when I may undeceive him :  
I'm forced to-day at least to make th' attempt.

*An.* Behold him here.

*Cæ.* Now leave me with him ; soon  
Hence will I come to thee.

*An.* Ah, mayest thou  
Completely extricate thyself from error ;  
And him in time, too, thoroughly detect.

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Brutus, Cæsar.*

*Bru.* Oh Cæsar, we are ancient foes : but thou  
Art hitherto the conqueror ; and yet  
Thou seem'st the happier. But I am still  
Than thou less wretched, though I seem the conquer'd.

But v hate'er be our state, o'erwhelm'd, oppress'd,  
Conquer'd, infirm, exanimate is Rome.  
An equal impulse, though from different motives,  
Has hither brought us to confer together.  
Thou hast important things to say to me  
If Anthony speak the truth ; and also I  
Come to impart to thee important things,  
If thou dare listen to them.

*Cæ.* Although Brutus  
Hath ever been my foe, I ne'er was such,  
Nor am I now to him ; nor, if I would,  
Could I be ever so. I to thy dwelling  
Would have myself repair'd to speak with thee ;

But I shrunk back lest it might be by thee  
Deem'd an indignity, if Cæsar dared  
To go, where, as the wife of Brutus, dwells  
The sister of great Cato : hence I sent  
Earnest entreaties to thyself to come  
Hither from thence.—Me, without any pomp  
Thou seest alone, by lictors not preceded ;  
In all thy equal, Brutus ; if indeed  
Thou scorn me not as such. Here thou wilt hear  
Nor Rome's dictator, nor the conqueror  
Of the illustrious Pompey . . .

*Bru.* The only train  
Not unbecoming Cæsar is his valour :  
And more especially when he presents  
Himself to Brutus.—Happy thou, if thou  
Could'st also leave behind thee, as thou canst  
Thy lictors, and their fasces, the remorse,  
And the perpetual and cleaving terror,  
Of a perpetual dictator !

*Cæ.* Terror? . . .  
This is a word not even to my ears,  
Much less then to my heart, yet known.

*Bru.* It was  
Unknown to mighty Cæsar in the camp,  
Invincible as a leader ; it is not  
To Cæsar in the walls of Rome, by force  
Now her dictator. To deny this to me  
Cæsar is too magnanimous : to me  
He may confess it without shame. To dare  
T' acknowledge this to Brutus, in itself  
Will constitute no small part of his greatness.  
Let us speak frankly : it becomes us both.—  
One individual never can impress

A multitude with fear, till he himself  
Has previously felt it. To prove this,  
Hear what is now thy state of mind towards me.  
Thou without opposition may'st kill Brutus :  
Thou knowest that I love thee not ; nay more,  
Thou knowest I may be an obstacle  
To thy iniquitous ambition : yet,  
Why dost thou not do this ? Because thou fearest,  
That if thou kill'd me now it might increase  
Thy own perplexities. Thou would'st meanwhile,  
Hear me, and speak with me ; because that fear  
Is now thy only law ; nor this perchance  
Thou know'st thyself ; or flyest the conviction.

*Cæ.* Ungrateful ! . . . In Pharsalia's field was not  
Thy life within my power ?

*Bru.* But thou inflamed  
With glory, and yet glowing from the battle,  
Wert noble then ; and thou wert born to be so ;  
But thou from day to-day here more and more  
Sinkest beneath thyself.—Reform, and know  
That thou wert never born to be a cold,  
Pacific tyrant : I affirm it to thee . . .

*Cæ.* Thy praise, though mix'd with insults, pleases me.  
I love thee ; I esteem thee : and I would  
Be Brutus only, if I were not Cæsar.

*Bru.* Thou may'st be both ; to Brutus may'st thou  
add,  
And nothing take from Cæsar : I come to thee  
Myself, t' exhort thee to it. It depends  
On thyself only to be great indeed :  
Yes, thou may'st be so, even far beyond  
Each ancient mighty Roman : and the means

Are very simple ; dare to adopt them then :  
I first to this conjure thee ; and I feel,  
As I address thee, with true Roman tears  
Mine eyes suffused . . . But, ah ! thou speakest not ?  
Thou know'st well what my lofty means would be :  
Thou feel'st it in thy heart, the cry of truth,  
That there imperiously fulminates.  
Be bold, be bold ; shake off thy abject chains,  
That make thee nothing e'en in thine own eyes ;  
Which keep thee, more than others thou could'st-  
keep,

Enslaved and bound. To-day from Brutus thou  
Learn to be Caesar. If of thy renown  
I were invidious, would'st thou hear me now  
Beseech thee to annihilate my own ?  
I know the truth ; I flatter not myself :  
I am in Rome inferior to thee  
In dignity, in years, in power, and triumphs,  
As well as fame. If by my single efforts  
The name of Brutus could be signalized,  
'Twere only possible for this to be  
By the entire destruction of thy name.  
A timid and a whispering voice I hear,  
A voice thence not legitimately Roman,  
Proclaiming Brutus Rome's deliverer,  
As it calls thee her tyrant. It is needful  
To make me such, that I defeat, or slay thee.  
No light achievement is the first ; the second  
Is far more easy than thou canst believe :  
And if I had thought of myself alone,  
I had already been without a master :  
But I, a Roman, think of Rome ; and chuse  
Thee to solicit, when I ought to slay thee,

For her sake only.—Yes, ah Cæsar, thou  
 Convinced by me, should'st be compell'd once more  
 To be her citizen. To Rome thou canst,  
 Thou first, thou only, more effectually  
 A thousand times, than Brutus can, thou canst  
 To Rome restore the whole ; peace, liberty,  
 Salvation, and a renovated lustre,  
 In short, as much as thou hast taken from her.  
 Yet, for a little time, thy royal power  
 Do thou, though as a citizen, exert,  
 In reinforcing her enfeebled laws,  
 In taking evermore from all the courage,  
 And means to imitate thee as a tyrant ;  
 And thou wilt thus at once from all have taken,  
 As far as they are Romans, the presumption  
 To emulate thee as a citizen.—  
 Now, tell me ; dost thou think thou art less than

Sylla ?

He, far more guilty than thyself, more cruel,  
 Embrued, and gorged with more abundant blood,  
 He, yet presumed to be a citizen,  
 And was illustrious.—Oh ! how much more so  
 Would Cæsar be, who has so much surpass'd  
 Sylla in power ! Greater, far greater then ;  
 Would be thy glory, if thou freely render,  
 What power and artifice have given to thee,  
 To her, thy country, whose sole right it is ;  
 If thou knowest better how to prize thyself ;  
 If thou, in short, preventest that henceforth  
 In Rome to all eternity arise  
 Another Cæsar, and another Sylla.

*Cæ.* —Sublime and ardent youth ; thy eloquent  
 And fervid exhortation, is, perchance,

But too, too true. Thy sentiments produce  
Unspeakable emotions in my heart ;  
And then when thou call'st thyself less than me,  
Thy great superiority I feel  
E'en to my own confusion. But to be  
The first myself to confess this to thee,  
And not to be offended when I do it,  
And not to hate thee for it, ought to be  
To thee a certain, and a lofty proof  
That in my bosom I conceive for thee  
Some unexplain'd affection.—Thou art dear  
To me, believe it ; thou art very dear.  
That which I have not time to accomplish now,  
I will that, after me, it be by thee  
Accomplish'd more effectively. Consent  
That to my many trophies I annex  
Those of the vanquish'd Parthians, and I die  
Contented. Great part of my life have I  
Pass'd in the camp : the camp alone would be  
To me a worthy tomb. 'Tis true, I've robb'd her  
In part, of freedom, but in more abundance  
I have increased for Rome her power and glory.  
Oh Brutus, at my death, thou wilt repair,  
Beneath the shadow of my victories,  
The wrongs which I have done to her. In me  
With safety Rome no longer can repose.  
The good which I would do to her, would be,  
By what I've done of evil, evermore  
Tarnish'd and poison'd.—Thence I've chosen thee  
As the physician in my secret thoughts,  
For her internal wounds : thou ever wert  
Upright and great ; and better than myself,  
The Romans thou canst make illustrious :

And thou, their perfect sanity restore.  
 I, as a father, speak to thee ; . . . and thou,  
 More than a son, oh Brutus, art to me.

*Bru.* . . . This thy discourse I scarcely comprehend.

To me in no wise justly can devolve  
 Thy illegitimate, extinguish'd power.  
 But what ? Already speakest thou of Rome,  
 As a paternal heritage ? . . .

*Cæ.* Ah ! hear me.—I

From thee no longer can a subject hide,  
 Which, when once known to thee, entirely ought  
 To change thee in my favour.

*Bru.* Change thyself,  
 And I at once am changed ; conquer thyself ;  
 The only triumph that remains for thee . . .

*Cæ.* With different eyes, when thou hast heard  
 this secret,  
 Wilt thou behold me.

*Bru.* I shall ever be  
 A Roman. But explain thyself.

*Cæ.* . . . Oh Brutus,  
 In my deportment towards thee, in my looks,  
 And in my accents, in my very silence,  
 Say, dost thou not perceive that towards thyself  
 Boundless affections influence and transport me ?

*Bru.* I see in thee I know not what emotion ;  
 And from the man they rather seem to spring  
 Than from the tyrant : feign'd, I cannot think them ;  
 Unfeign'd, to what I know not to impute them.

*Cæ.* . . . But thou, what impulses dost thou experience,  
 Towards me within thy bosom ?



**Bru.** Ah, a thousand !  
And for thyself alternately I prove  
All impulses, save envy. I know not  
How to express them ; but in two I class them :  
Anger and horror, if thou'rt still a tyrant ;  
If thou becom'st a man and citizen,  
Thou dost inspire me with unbounded love  
Mix'd with astonishment. Which of these two  
Would'st thou from Brutus ?

**Cæ.** Love. To me thou ow'st it . . .  
A sacred, and indissoluble tie  
Binds thee to me.

**Bru.** To thee ? What can this be ? . . .

**Cæ.** Thou art my son.

**Bru.** Oh heaven ! What do I hear ? . . .

**Cæ.** Ah, come, son, to my breast . . .

**Bru.** Can it be so ? . . .

**Cæ.** If thou believ'st this not from my report,  
Thou from thy mother surely wilt believe it.  
This is a letter from her ; in Pharsalia,  
A few hours ere the battle, I received it.  
Behold : her hand is known to thee : peruse it !

**Bru.** (*Reads the letter.*) " Cæsar, oh heaven !  
thou dost perhaps prepare,  
" Not only with thy fellow citizens,  
" And Pompey to wage war, but with thy son.  
" Brutus is th' offspring of our youthful loves.  
" I am constrain'd to make this known to thee ;  
" To this confession nothing could have wrought me  
" Except a mother's fears. Thou shudderest, Cæsar ;  
" Suspend, if time be yet allow'd, thy sword :  
" Thou by thy son may'st be destroy'd ; or thou  
" Thyself with thy own hand may'st slay thy son.

" I tremble . . . Oh may heaven grant that in time  
 " A father may have heard my word ! . . I tremble . .  
 " Servilia."—Fierce and unexpected blow !  
 The son of Cæsar, I ?

*Cæ.* Ah yes ! thou art.  
 Come to my arms, ah come !

*Bru.* Oh Rome ! . . oh father ! . .  
 Oh nature ! . . oh my duty ! . . —Ere I clasp thee,  
 See, at thy feet a suppliant Brutus falls.  
 Nor will he rise, if he do not embrace  
 In thee the father of himself . and Rome.

*Cæ.* Ah, rise, oh son !—how canst thou ever thus  
 With such ferocious coldness freeze thy heart,  
 That nature's first affections sway thee not ?

*Bru.* And what, dost thou pretend to love thy son ?  
 Thou lov'st thyself ; all feelings in thy heart  
 Are to the love of rule alone subservient.  
 Prove that thou art a citizen and father ;  
 The last a tyrant never is : ah prove  
 That thou art such, and thou wilt find in me  
 A son. Twice give me life : Brutus a slave  
 Can never be ; tyrant he will not be.  
 Or Brutus is the son of a free father,  
 Himself free also, in free Rome ; or Brutus  
 Will not exist. I'm ready to shed all  
 My blood for Rome, and for thyself, if thou  
 A Roman be, a father worthy Brutus . . .  
 Oh joy ! a noble tear do I behold  
 Start from thine eye ? The icy crust is snapp'd  
 In which thy heart was cased ; thou'rt now a father.  
 Ah ! hear thou by my lips the cry of nature ;  
 And Rome and Brutus shall for thee be one.

*Cæ.* . . . My heart thou rendest . . . Fierce neces-  
 sity ! . .

I cannot now exclusively obey  
The emotions of my heart. Beloved Brutus,  
Hear me. Too far the servitude of Rome  
Is now advanced; with less of equity,  
And with more injury to herself, will others  
The reins of empire sieze upon, if now  
Brutus refuse them from the hands of Cæsar . . .

*Bru.* Oh trait'rous words! Oh infamous expressions

Of a corrupted and degenerate mind!  
To me thou never wert, nor art a father.  
Ere thou revealed'st thy ignoble heart,  
And my vile birth to me, had thy own hands  
Cut short my thread of life, that act had been  
Of kindness more expressive . . .

*Cæ.* Oh my son! . . .

*Bru.* Oh Cæsar, yield . . .

*Cæ.* Unnatural, . . . ungrateful . . .

What then wilt thou perform?

*Bru.* Or rescue Rome,  
Or in the attempt expire.

*Cæ.* I will reclaim thee,  
Or perish by thy hands. Unparallel'd  
And horrible is thy ingratitude . . .  
Yet, hence I hope that horror and repentance  
Will visit thee, or ere to-morrow's dawn  
Shall see us in the senate house convened.  
But if thou then, ungrateful! still persist  
Not to accept me for a father, then,  
If, as a son, thou still disdain to share  
With me the whole, on that same dawn shalt thou  
Find me again thy lord.

*Bru.* Ere then, I hope,

The horror and the shame to have found thyself  
A tyrant to no purpose, will have changed thee  
To a true father. In my breast at once  
The affection of a son cannot arise,  
If first thou do not give to me a proof  
Sublime and strong of thy paternal love.  
A father's is the first of all affections ;  
And in thy heart it ought to conquer. Then  
The most submissive, the most tender son,  
The most affectionate that e'er was seen,  
Then wilt thou find in me . . . In being thy son  
What joy then, what devotion, and what pride,  
Oh father, shall I feel ! . . .

*Cæ.* Thou art my son,  
Whatever I may be ; nor e'er canst thou,  
Without being impious, strive against thy father . . .

*Bru.* My name is Brutus ; and to me is Rome  
A sublime mother ! Ah, compel me not  
To deem that Roman Brutus, who gave life  
And liberty to Rome at the expense  
Of his own children's blood, my only father.

## SCENE THE THIRD.

*Cæsar.*

*Cæ.* Ah, wretched me ! . . And can it then be true,  
That, while I fetter all the conquer'd world,  
My son alone refuses to obey me ?

## ACT THE FOURTH.

## SCENE THE FIRST.

*Cassius, Cimber.*

*Cim.* That which I say to thee is certain : hence  
A short time since Brutus was seen to go,  
With troubled countenance, his eyes suffused  
With tears, and towards his house he went. Oh could  
He ever change ? . . .

*Cas.* Ah no ! Brutus loves Rome ;  
And he loves glory and integrity ;  
Soon, as he promised, will he come to us.  
I do rely and trust in him e'en more  
Than in myself. Each word and deed of his  
Spring from a lofty heart ; the interest  
Of Rome alone he weighs and contemplates.

*Cim.* Behold him here.

*Cas.* Did not I tell thee so ?

## SCENE THE SECOND.

*Brutus, Cassius, Cimber.*

*Bru.* What may this mean ? I find you here alone.

*Cas.* And are we few, when thou'rt united to us ?

*Bru.* Tully is wanting . . .

*Cim.* Didst thou not know this ?

Erewhile with many other senators  
From Rome precipitately he departed.

*Cas.* The frost of years hath paralyzed in him  
His pristine ardour and his virtue . . .

*Bru.* But

Hath not extinguish'd them. Ah, let no Roman  
Dare to despise the illustrious Cicero.  
For a more fortunate conjuncture, or  
For Rome's advantage, he reserves (I swear it)  
His liberty and life.

*Cas.* Oh happy we!  
Certain are we, certain to gain, with freedom,  
An honour'd and an honourable age,  
Or in the bloom of life with Rome to perish.

*Bru.* Ah! yes; ye're blest indeed!... Not so am I;  
To whom the horrible alternative  
Alone remains of living as a slave,  
Or perpetrating crimes abhor'd by nature.

*Cas.* What dost thou mean?

*Cim.* And what hast thou derived  
From thy long conference with Cæsar?

*Bru.* I?...  
Nothing for Rome; immeasurable grief  
And horror for myself; for you amazement,  
Mix'd perchance also with a just contempt.

*Cim.* For whom?

*Bru.* For Brutus.

*Cim.* We,... contempt... for thee?

*Cas.* Thou,... who of us art, and of Rome, the  
soul?

*Bru.* I am,... who would have thought it?  
Wretched me!...

I hitherto esteem'd myself the nephew  
And son-in-law of Cato the divine;...  
And I'm the offspring of the tyrant Cæsar.

*Cim.* What do I hear? Can it be so?...

*Cas.* And be it;  
This hinders not that Brutus still should be.

The tyrant's most inexorable foe :

Ah ! Cassius swears this.

*Bru.* An unexpected  
And horrible stigma on my blood I find ;  
To cleanse it I should shed it all for Rome.

*Cas.* Brutus should be alone the son of Brutus.

*Cim.* But yet, what evidence did Cæsar bring ?  
How on his word rely ? ...

*Bru.* Ah, evidence  
But too decisive he adduced to me.  
He from the first spoke to me as a father :  
Henceforth he wish'd that I should share with him  
His execrable power, and afterwards  
Should be its infamous inheritor.  
Yet human tears from his despotic eyes  
Ceased not to fall ; and he to me unfolded,  
As to a son, the darkest labyrinths,  
Unblushingly, of his corrupted heart.  
At length, to make me perfectly convinced,  
He made me read (oh heaven ! ) a fatal letter.  
With her own hand, Servilia wrote it to him.  
In that disastrous letter, which was written  
And read by him ere the Pharsalian trumpet  
" Gave dreadful note of preparation,"  
Servilia apprehensively reveals  
And proves, that I'm the offspring of their loves ;  
And in concise and energetic words,  
She conjures Cæsar not to make himself  
The murderer of his son.

*Cim.* Oh fatal secret !  
Why didst thou not in everlasting night  
Remain conceal'd ? ...

*Cas.* If as a son he loves thee,

In seeing in thee so much real virtue,  
 In hearing thy sublime awakening thoughts,  
 How could the spirit of a genuine father  
 Ever resist thee? Thou hast now brought back  
 Indubitable proof from him, that nothing  
 Can rescue Cæsar from his vile delusion.

*Bru.* Sometimes e'en yet to his infatuate mind  
 Truth penetrates, but with a feeble ray.  
 Accustom'd long to military power,  
 A fatal error absolutely rules him;  
 He deems consummate power consummate glory;  
 He thence persists to wish for this or death.

*Cim.* And such a monster, let him then have death.

*Cas.* He is a fix'd incorrigible tyrant.  
 Think now then that a citizen of Rome,  
 Oh Brutus, has no father ...

*Cim.* Further think,  
 That he who is a tyrant has no sons ...

*Bru.* And that in heart Brutus will ne'er have  
 peace.—

Yes, in your presence now, high-minded friends,  
 This I confess; to you, who feel at heart  
 Nature's affections sacred and sublime;  
 To you, who take the impulse and the law  
 That prompt this lofty necessary deed,  
 Which we are now resolved to execute,  
 From nature take it; to you, who now pant,  
 With me, for ever to annihilate  
 That tyranny which severs and divides  
 And blasts each holiest tie, to make alone  
 Children secure within their father's bosoms;  
 To you I fear not to shew all the grief  
 And all the horror, which, in rivalry,



Little by little, tear my heart to pieces,  
Who am the son of Cæsar and of Rome.  
Before the tyrant's face I shew'd myself  
His bitter and inexorable foe ;

Nor did a word of mine, a look, a tear,  
Betray a human weakness : but, alas !  
No sooner had I from his sight escaped,  
Than, as a victim, by a thousand furies  
My spirit was beset. I flew from him  
To my own Lares : there it is my lot  
Always to find a sure alleviation  
And fortifying counsel, and a heart  
Far more sublime than mine : yes, Cato's daughter,  
Equal to Cato, the illustrious Porcia,  
My Lares dignifies, the wife of Brutus . . .

*Cas.* Worthy of Cato and of Brutus is  
That high-soul'd lady.

*Cim.* Ah ! could this be also  
Said of Servilia !

*Bru.* Troubled as I was,  
She welcomed me with countenance serene  
And resolute, though now for many days  
She had lain sick. Before I spake to her,  
She cried to me, " Brutus, thou hast conceal'd  
" Long in thy bosom mighty purposes :  
" I never dared to question thee of them,  
" Till by a certain but ferocious test  
" I had myself my courage fully known.  
" See ; I am not a woman."—Saying this,  
She lets the foldings of her mantle fall,  
And shews to me a large and horrible wound  
Beneath her breast. Then she continued thus :  
" With this right hand, and with this very dagger,

" Now many days since, this wide wound was made :  
" It has been evermore conceal'd from thee,  
" And by my heart inflexibly supported,  
" Although my infirm frame in sickness languish'd ;  
" At length this wound, if I am not deceived,  
" Renders me worthy both to hear and keep  
" The secrets of my Brutus."

*Cim.* What a woman !

*Cas.* What man can be compared to her ?

*Bru.* I fell .

Prostrate before her, at a sight like this,  
As to my sublime tutelary genius ;  
And weeping, motionless, astonish'd, mute,  
I stood. Thence, reassuming speech, I told her  
All the ferocious conflicts of my heart.  
Seeing me weep, she wept ; but her tears were  
Roman, not feminine. She blamed alone  
The adverse fates ; and giving me perhaps  
The last embrace, she dared remind me yet  
That I'm a son of Rome, and Porcia's husband,  
And that my name is Brutus.—Never, never,  
Not for an instant, have I given such names  
T' oblivion : and I come to swear this to you.  
I only purposed to communicate  
To you the least part of my horrible state ;  
And what I hitherto have said is merely  
The anguish that throbs audibly to friends.  
Now I'm aware I should convince you first,  
That even nature cannot make me swerve  
From Rome . . . But grief, unutterable grief,  
Will take me afterwards too certainly  
From the possession of myself for ever.

*Cim.* 'Tis true that we are Romans ; but we are

Men also ; not in any wise to feel  
The affections of our nature, were in us  
Proofs of a brute ferocity . . . Oh Brutus ! . . .  
By thy words e'en from me are tears extorted :

*Cas.* All human impulses we ought to feel ;  
But before those due to our bleeding country,  
Sick and exanimate, the rest are mute :  
Or if they speak indeed, it is allowed  
To every man ere Brutus to regard them.

*Bru.* In thus accounting me more than I am,  
Noble and strong, thou makest me more strong  
And noble than I could be by myself.  
Cassius, behold my tears are now dispersed.  
The shades of night are gathering fast : to-morrow  
Will be the important day. I swear once more,  
That which already is resolved among us.  
On you do I implicitly depend ;  
Depend on me : nothing of you I ask,  
Except that you depend upon the signal  
From me alone.

*Cas.* Ah ! thou art certainly  
The noblest of the Romans.—But, who comes ? . .

*Cim.* Whom see I ? Anthony ?

*Bru.* Assuredly  
Cæsar now sends him to me. Wait, and hear us.

SCENE THE THIRD.

*Anthony, Cassius, Brutus, Cimber.*

*An.* Oh Brutus, I come here in quest of thee ;  
I wish to speak with thee.

*Bru.* Speak on : I listen.

*An.* But the dictator charged me with this message . . .

*Bru.* And what of that, I pray thee?

*An.* I should speak

To thee alone.

*Bru.* And here I am alone.

Cassius is husband of my sister Junia ;  
Cimber was friend, and the most faithful friend,  
Of the great Cato, my wife's father : blood,  
The love of Rome, and friendship, render us,  
Though three we be in person, one in soul.  
Cæsar can never utter aught to Brutus,  
That he re-utters not immediately  
To Cassius and to Cimber.

*An.* Is their father

Also the same with thine?

*Bru.* They too have shared

With me the shame and sorrow of my birth ;  
They know it all. Speak on.—I am assured  
That Cæsar, generous, once again himself,  
Sends thee to take from me the past disgrace  
Of having once been deem'd a tyrant's son.  
Divulge the whole, be quick : thou can'st not have  
More acceptable witnesses than these  
Of Cæsar's sublime transit, from a tyrant,  
As he was lately, to a citizen.  
Make haste ; his new-born lofty love for Rome  
Reveal to us ; his true paternal views  
Towards me, that I may bless the day in which  
He gave me birth.

*An.* Cæsar commanded me

To speak to thee alone. A blind and true,  
As much as wretched father, he would yet

Flatter himself, that thou would'st yield at last  
To nature's sacred and persuasive voice.

*Bru.* And in what fashion am I then to yield?  
To what submit myself? . . .

*An.* To love and honour  
The author of thy life : or if, perchance,  
Thy hard heart is incapable of love,  
Not to betray thy most imperious duties ;  
To shew thyself not mindless and unworthy  
Of benefits received ; and finally  
To merit those which he reserves for thee  
In future. Fear'st thou to be too humane  
If thou submit to this ?

*Bru.* Those which thou now  
Giv'st artfully to me are empty words.  
Advance, and answer me. Is Cæsar ready  
To-morrow, in full senate, to renounce  
The office of dictator ? Is he ready  
His standing army to disband ? To free  
The Romans from their universal terror ?  
To free his friends and enemies from this,  
And finally himself ? To restore life  
To the most sacred laws by him despised,  
The enervated, obliterated laws ?  
To be the first to place himself beneath them ?  
These are the express, only benefits,  
That a true father can confer on Brutus.

*An.* Enough. Would'st thou say more to me ?

*Bru.* I say  
No more to him that merits not to hear me.—  
Return then to thy lord, and say to him,  
That yet I hope, nay, more, I trust, am certain,  
That in the senate by to-morrow's dawn,

He will propose useful and lofty things  
 For Rome's prosperity and liberty :  
 Tell him, that then, before assembled Rome,  
 Brutus will first fall prostrate at his feet,  
 As citizen and son ; if he too be  
 A citizen and father. Lastly, tell him,  
 That in my heart I burn as much to make  
 Rome live again for all of us, as I  
 Burn to make Cæsar live again for her . . .

*An.* I understand thee. I will tell him that  
 Which I (too fruitlessly, alas !) already  
 Long since have said to him.

*Bru.* I esteem thee,  
 A faithless and malignant messenger  
 'Twixt Cæsar and myself : nevertheless,  
 If he for this selected thee, thou hast  
 Thy answer now received.

*An.* If the dictator  
 Consulted me, or the interests of Rome,  
 No other messenger would he dispatch  
 To Brutus but the lictors with their axes.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

*Brutus, Cassius, Cimber.*

*Cim.* Heard ye . . .

*Cas.* Oh Brutus ! . . . Thou'rt the God of Rome. .

*Cim.* This arrogant and despicable slave,  
 He also should be punish'd . . .

*Bru.* He, methinks,  
 Would not be worthy our revenge. My friends,  
 I make the last experiment to-morrow.  
 If it be vain, we mutually have promised

That I should give, and you obey the signal.  
Will ye confide in me?

*Cas.* Thou art our all.

Let us depart from hence: it is now time  
To go hence to the few whom we have chosen;  
And who are ready for the sake of Rome  
To die with us to-morrow.

*Bru.* Let us go.

### ACT THE FIFTH.

*The Scene is in the Basilica of Pompey.*

#### SCENE THE FIRST.

*Brutus, Cassius, Senators, who in succession take  
their Places.*

*Cas.* It seems to me this meeting will be small;  
Much smaller than the last...

*Bru.* Provided that  
The hearts of the remainder be but firm,  
'Tis all we want.

*Cas.* Dost thou, oh Brutus, hear  
How the unquiet people with their cries  
Already make the deafening air resound?

*Bru.* Their cries they vary at each new event:  
Leave them; e'en they perchance to-day may help us.

*Cas.* I never saw thee calm as thou art now,  
And so secure.

*Bru.* The danger spreads.

*Cas.* Oh Brutus!...

Brutus, I yield to thee alone.

*Bru.* Great Pompey,

Who breathes in sculptured marble here, and seems  
Now to preside o'er our few partizans,  
Makes me secure as to th' approaching danger.

*Cas.* Behold, the lictors of the tyrant coming.

*Bru.* Casca and Cimber, where?

*Cas.* Fiercely they have  
Forestall'd by violence the post of danger . . .  
They closely follow Cæsar.

*Bru.* Hast thou thought  
To hinder, that the impious Anthony? . . .

*Cas.* Yes : Fulvius and Macrinus will at length  
Keep him at bay at distance from the senate ;  
If it be also needful t' intercept him,  
This will they do by force.

*Bru.* Now all is well.  
Let each one take his place — Cassius, farewell.  
We from each other separate as slaves ;  
Soon, as free men, I hope, we shall embrace,  
Or dying — First shalt thou be witness here  
To the last efforts of a son ; and then  
To the last efforts of a citizen.

*Cas.* Each weapon on thy nod depends, oh Brutus !

SCENE THE SECOND.

*Senators seated. Brutus and Cassius in their places.*

*Cæsar, preceded by Lictors, which afterwards leave him ; Casca, Cimber, and many others, follow him. All rise at the entrance of Cæsar, and continue standing till he be seated.*

*Cæ.* What can this mean ? Scarcè half the senate  
here,  
Although th' appointed hour be past. . . . But I



Beyond my duty have in this transgress'd.—  
Ye conscript fathers, I lament that thus  
I have detain'd you . . . But yet, what can be  
The cause that takes from me so many of you ?

( UNIVERSAL SILENCE )

*Bru.* Does no one answer ? The demanded cause  
Is known to all of us. Is it not, Cæsar,  
Fully divulged to thee by this our silence  
But, would'st thou hear it ? Those whom thou seest  
here,

Terror collected ; those whom thou seest not,  
Terror dispersed.

*Cæ.* I am not unaccustom'd  
To the intemperate harangues of Brutus,  
As to the generous clemency of Cæsar  
Thou art not unaccustom'd. But in vain ;  
For here I came not to dispute . . .

*Bru.* Nor we  
To offend thee idly. Certainly those fathers  
Were ill-advised who vanish'd from the senate  
On such a joyful day : and ill act those  
Who in the senate now stand mute. Myself,  
Fully apprized of the high sentiments  
Which Cæsar purposes t' unfold to us,  
Can scarce restrain th' expression of my joy ;  
Feeling the eager wish to dissipate  
The false alarm of others. Ah ! no, now  
Cæsar doth not within his bosom cherish  
Against his country any guilty purpose ;  
Ah no ! that generous clemency of his,  
With which to-day he has upbraided Brutus,  
And which in future he ought not to exert  
Towards me, to trembling and afflicted Rome

He hath directed all of it already.  
 To-day, I swear to you, that Cæsar adds  
 A new one, and the most sublime of all,  
 To his so many triumphs; thence he here  
 Presents himself the victor of himself,  
 And of the envy of his adversaries.  
 Yes, noble fathers, this I swear to you;  
 Cæsar to-day assembles you to this  
 His sublime triumph: he has now resolved  
 To recreate himself th' associate,  
 The equal of his fellow-citizens;  
 This would he do spontaneously; and hence  
 'Mid all the men that have been in the world,  
 There never was, nor will be, Cæsar's equal.

*Cæ.* I might, oh Brutus, interrupt thy speech...

*Bru.* Nor let mine seem to you rash arrogance,  
 Scarcely a prætor that I should presume  
 To anticipate the words of the dictator,  
 For Brutus now and the illustrious Cæsar  
 Are but one person.—I behold your brows  
 Arch'd with amazement: to the senators  
 My language is obscure; but speedily,  
 I shall make all clear with a single word.  
 I am the son of Cæsar...

(AN UNIVERSAL CRY OF ASTONISHMENT.)

*Bru.* Yes; I am born from him; now do I thence  
 Light exultation feel; since to day Cæsar  
 Becomes, from a perpetual dictator,  
 A first-rate, and perpetual citizen.

(AN UNIVERSAL CRY OF JOY.)

*Cæ.* ... Yes, Brutus is my son; I myself told  
 Erewhile to him this secret. Th' energy,  
 The eloquence, the impetuosity,

I know not what of superhuman power  
 That breathes in his discourse, made on my heart  
 A deep impression : ardent, and aspiring,  
 My genuine son, is Brutus. Hence, oh Romans,  
 I chuse him, far more worthy than myself,  
 To perform for you after me that service,  
 Which now no longer lies within my power :  
 I have decided to transfer to him  
 My whole authority ; in him have I  
 Establish'd it : in him will ye have Cæsar . . .

*Bru.* I stand secure : not Brutus' enemies  
 The most embitter'd and implacable,  
 Much more his friends, then, never will believe him  
*Of this e'er capable* ; ah no !—To me,  
 Cæsar, oh Romans, yields his power : he would  
 Imply by this, that Cæsar abdicates,  
 At the entreaties of myself his son,  
 His unjust power, that he replaces Rome  
 In liberty for ever.

(AN UNIVERSAL CRY OF JOY.)

*Cæ.* 'Tis enough.—

Thou as my son, and younger than myself,  
 Shouldest keep silence in my presence.—Now,  
 Cæsar, oh fathers, speaks.—I have resolved  
 Irrevocably in my secret thoughts  
 To go against the Parthians. To-morrow  
 I march against Asia with my faithful legions :  
 There have I long been summon'd, and by force  
 Constrain'd to go, by th' unavenged shade  
 Of Crassus Rome I leave to Anthony ;  
 In him let her behold a second Cæsar :  
 Let Cimber, Casca, Cassius now return  
 To their allotted prefectures : my side

Brutus shall never quit. When I have slain  
 The enemies of Rome, I will return  
 And to my enemies submit myself:  
 Then, at her will, whichever she likes best,  
 Rome shall possess me as her citizen,  
 As her dictator, or discard me quite.

(UNIVERSAL SILENCE.)

*Bru.* — These were not certainly, which we have  
 heard,

The accents of a Roman, of my father,  
 Nor e'en of Cæsar. These were the harsh words  
 Of a despotic king.—Ah! father, yet  
 Hear me once more; behold my tears, and hear  
 Th' entreaties of a son and citizen.  
 Now all Rome by my mouth addresses thee.  
 Behold that Brutus, whom no man e'er saw  
 Hitherto weep or supplicate; behold him  
 Prostrate before thee. Would'st thou be to me,  
 And not to Rome, a father?

*Cæ.* I will not  
 Listen to prayers which are a public insult.  
 Arise: be mute.—He dares to call me tyrant;  
 But I am not one: if I were, had I  
 Myself permitted him to offer me  
 Such gross indignities before all Rome?—  
 What the dictator in his mind hath fix'd,  
 Should all be executed. Thus commands  
 The interest of Rome; and every man  
 Who doubts now, or refuses to obey me,  
 Is th' enemy of Rome; hostile to her,  
 He is an impious traitor.

*Bru.* Then let all  
 Of us now, as true citizens should do,

Obey the dictator.<sup>1</sup>

*Cim.* Die, tyrant, die!

*Cas.* And may I smite him also!

*Cæ.* Traitors...

*Bru.* Ah!

And must I be the only one to spare him?...

*Some Senators.* Die, let the tyrant die!

*Other Senators, flying.* Oh day of horrors!

*Cæ.*<sup>2</sup> Son,... and thou too!... I die...

*Bru.* Oh Rome!... Oh father!...

*Cim.* But at the cries of the pale fugitives,  
The people flock already in a crowd...

*Cas.* Let them come in; the tyrant is no more.  
Let us now hasten to slay Anthony.

#### SCENE THE THIRD.

*People, Brutus, Cæsar dead.*

*People.* What has now happen'd? What cries did  
we hear?

What blood is this? Ah Brutus yonder stands  
Immoveable with his uplifted dagger!

*Bru.* People of Mars, (if yet ye are so) thither,  
Now thither turn your looks. Behold who lies  
At mighty Pompey's feet...

*People.* Cæsar! Oh sight!...  
He in his blood immersed!... oh rage!

---

<sup>1</sup> Brutus unsheathes his dagger, and brandishes it aloft; the conspirators dart towards Cæsar with their swords.

<sup>2</sup> Oppressed with wounds, dragging himself to the statue of Pompey, and having covered his face with his robe, he dies.

*Bru.* Yes, Cæsar  
Lies in his blood immersed : and I, though ye  
See in my hand a blade not stain'd with blood,  
I too, with others, I too slaughter'd Cæsar . . .

*People.* Ah traitor ! thou shalt die . . .

*Bru.* Already, see,  
The weapon's point is turn'd towards my breast.  
I mean to die : but listen to me first.

*People.* Let those be murder'd first who transfix'd  
Cæsar . . .

*Bru.* Ye seek in vain for other murderers :  
Dispersed amid the fluctuating crowd  
The assassins have already disappear'd.  
Save Brutus, 'tis in vain for ye to seek  
Another murderer. If ye are impell'd  
By fury here, thirsting t' avenge the death  
Of the dictator, let the life of Brutus  
Now pacify your vengeance.—But, if yet  
The name of true and sacred liberty  
Reverberates in your hearts, and in your souls,  
Open your breasts t' unutterable joy :  
There he lies dead, there he lies dead at last,  
The king of Rome.

*People.* What is it that thou sayest ?

*Bru.* The king of Rome, yes, I confirm it to you,  
And swear that he was such : he *was* a king :  
Such he spoke here ; and such he shew'd himself,  
During the Lupercalia, to yourselves,  
That day, when he feigning the guilty crown  
Was his abhorrence, three times made the hand  
Of Anthony refit it on his head.  
The infamous collusion pleased you not ;  
And he became convinced by certain proof,

That, save by force, he ne'er would be a king.  
Hence, he would now have left Rome for the camp,  
Planning new wars, while she is quite exhausted  
Of men and arms and treasures ; certain hence  
By dint of arms here to return a king,  
And make you with harsh penalties repent  
The interdicted crown. Gold, flatteries, games,  
Banquets, and spectacles, he lavish'd on you,  
To make you slaves : but th' impious attempt  
Was ineffectual ; Romans, ye sell not  
Your liberty ; and yet I see you all  
Ready to die for it : and I am also,  
I, yes, as much as you. Rome now is free ;  
Brutus would now die satisfied. Be quick ;  
And sacrifice him who restores to you  
Life, liberty, and virtue ; yes, do ye  
Sacrifice Brutus to avenge your king.  
Behold my breast defenceless . . . let him kill me  
Who still would be a slave. But he ought now  
Who will not murder me, to follow me,  
And terminate the enterprize by force.

*People.* What words are these ? A god inspires  
him.

*Bru.* Ah !

I see the former parasites of Cæsar  
Become by little and by little Romans.  
Now hear if Brutus also be a Roman —  
Are there among you who have hitherto  
E'en ever dreamt of that which I am now  
About to tell you with a solemn oath.—  
The tyrant Cæsar was my real father.

*People.* Oh heaven ! What is it that thou tellest  
us ? . . .

*Bru.* I am the son of Cæsar ; this I swear ;  
He himself yesterday reveal'd to me  
The secret, and I swear to you, he wish'd  
To leave me, pledge of his paternal love,  
As if it were his proper heritage,  
Tranquil and undisputed, wish'd one day  
To leave me, his authority in Rome.

*People.* Oh vile audacity . . .

*Bru.* And thence he dared  
Discover all his guilty views to me . . .

*People.* Then (ah too certainly !) he did design  
At length to shew himself a thorough tyrant . . .

*Bru.* I, as a son, wept, and entreated him ;  
And lastly, as a citizen, conjured him  
T' abandon th' infamous design : ah ! what  
Did I not do, to change him from a king ? . . .  
I e'en entreated from him as a gift  
Death ; which from his hands I should more have  
prized

Than all his surreptitious royalty :  
But all in vain : in his tyrannical breast  
He had resolved to reign, or die. I then  
The signal gave to kill him ; I gave it  
Myself to a firm few : meanwhile on high  
I raised my trembling and suspended arm.

*People.* Oh pristine virtue ! oh true Brutus !

*Bru.* Yes ;  
The king of Rome is slain ; for this should we  
Pay homage to the gods : but yet has Brutus  
Slain his own father ; . . . and he merits death  
From you. And think ye I would live ? . . . I ought  
For a few instants still, while I exert  
Myself with you to give security



To Rome's regenerated commonwealth :  
The lofty duties yet must be fulfill'd  
Of citizen, and of deliverer ;  
For these alone Brutus consents to live :  
But a high obligation also dooms  
The impious and parricidal son  
Of the great Cæsar t' immolate himself,  
With his own hands, upon his father's tomb.

*People.* Oh dire event ! . . . Amazement, terror,  
pity ; . . .

Oh, what a multitude of impulses  
Have we at once experienced ! . . . But . . . oh sight !  
E'en in the midst of rage, Brutus himself  
Also dissolves in tears . . .

*Bru.* —I weep, oh Romans ;  
I weep for Cæsar dead. Sublime endowments  
Not to be equall'd in the world ; a soul,  
Which never had its counterpart, had Cæsar :  
Base is that heart which weeps not for him dead—  
But, who dare now again to wish him living  
Is not a Roman.

*People.* Thine are words of fire,  
Oh Brutus . . .

*Bru.* May yours then be deeds of fire ;  
The deed is lofty ; worthy of ourselves ;  
Follow my steps ; and let us now restore  
Full and eternal liberty to Rome.

*People.* For Rome, ah ! yes, following thy steps  
we're ready  
For all ; for any thing . . .

*Bru.* Make speed then, now  
Let us go quickly to the Capitol ;  
This is the seat sacred to liberty :

Would ye now leave it in the hands of traitors?

*People.* Let us depart: and wrest from traitors' hands

The sacred citadel.

*Bru.* To death, to death  
Or freedom let us go!

*People.* To death, to death  
With Brutus, or to freedom we depart.

## FAREWELL.

Judgment suggests to me that I should here  
Release my feet from the Italian buskin,  
(If it indeed e'er graced them) and that I  
Should to myself swear never to resume it.

1787.

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*Brutus moves forward, fiercely brandishing his sword; the people all follow him with fury.*

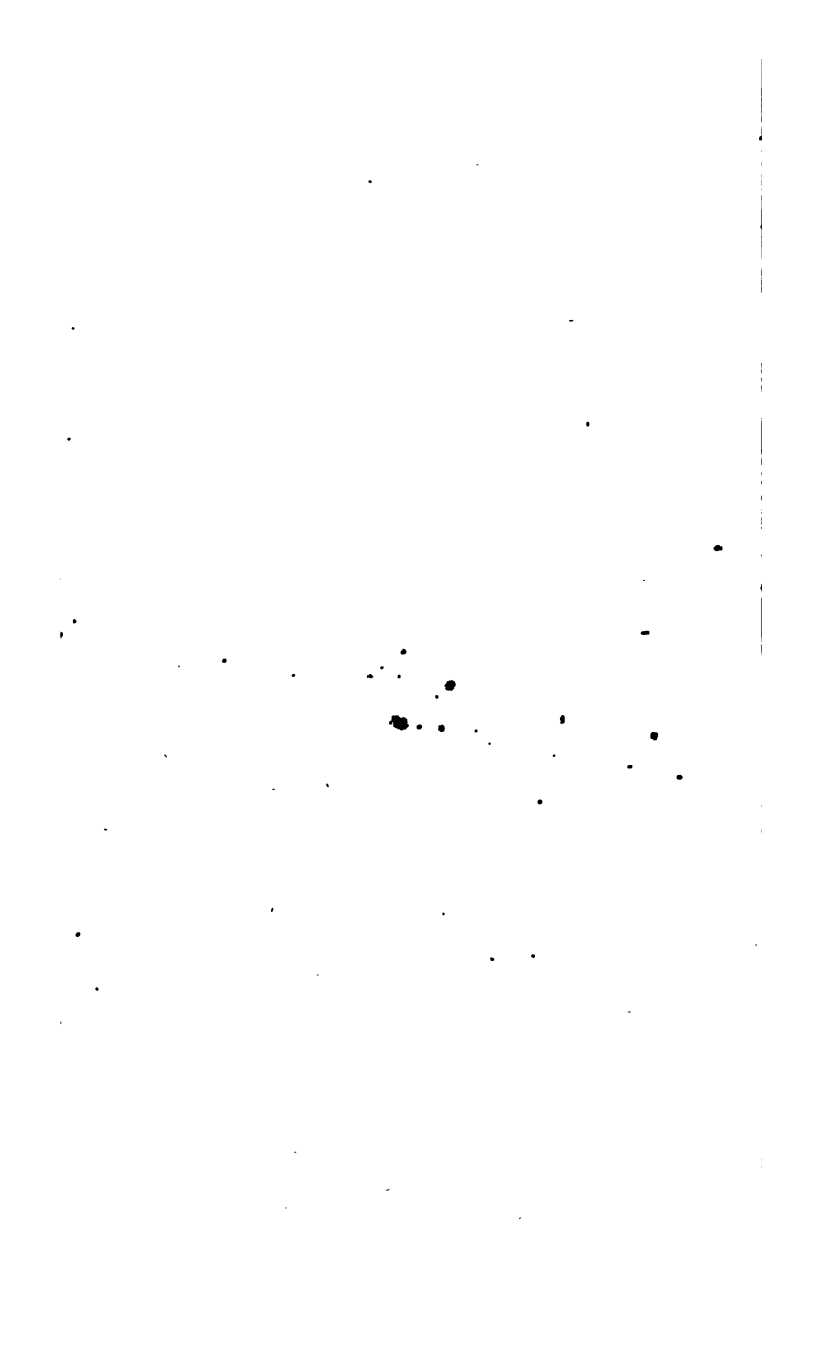
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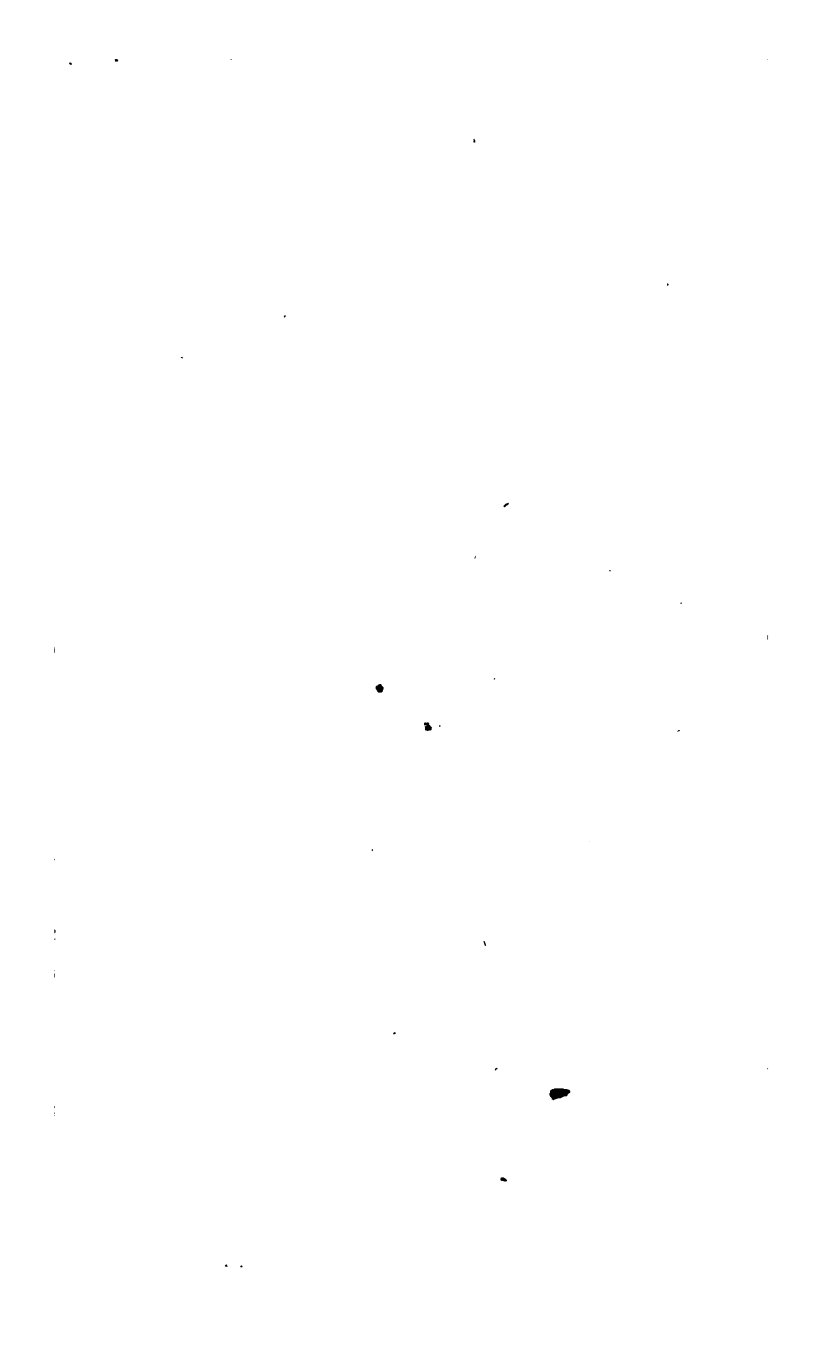
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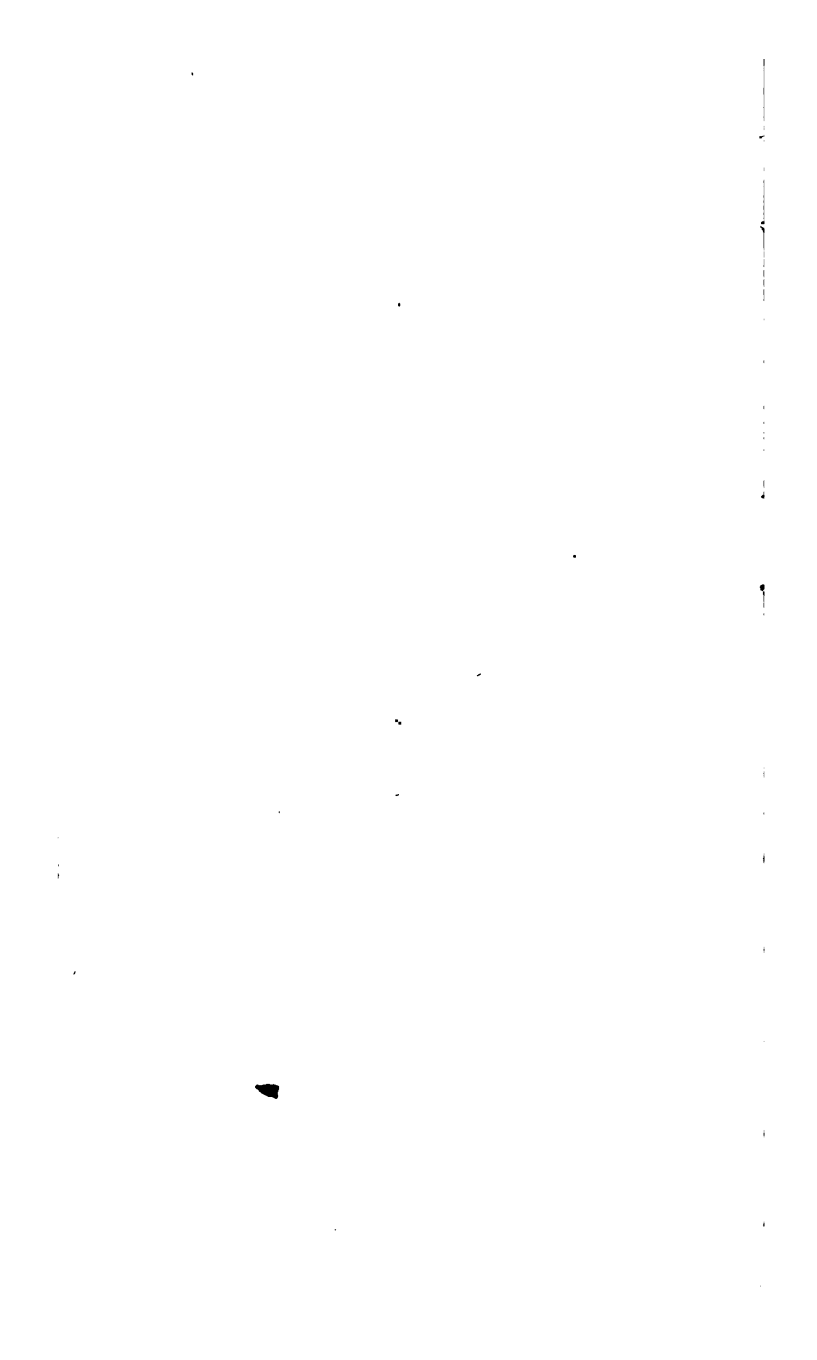
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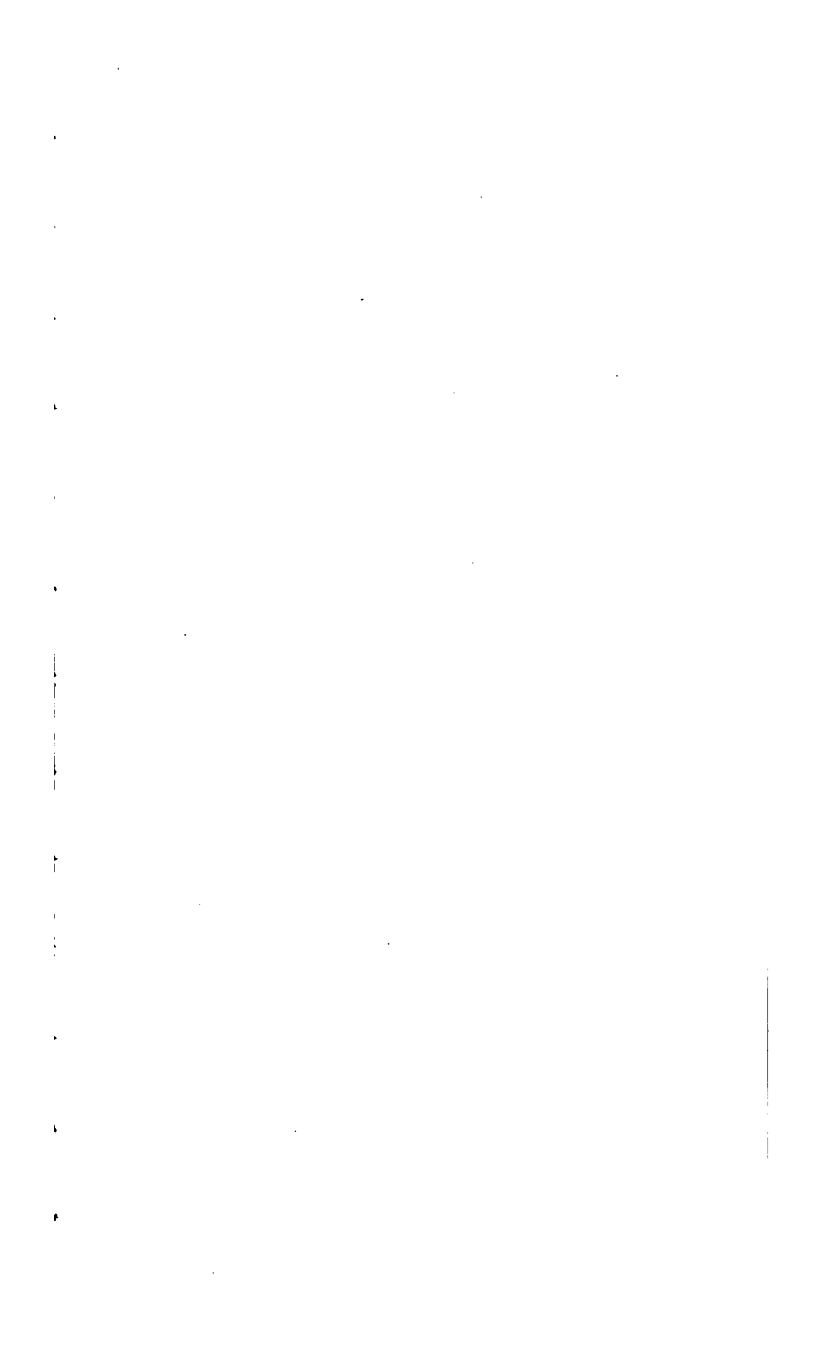






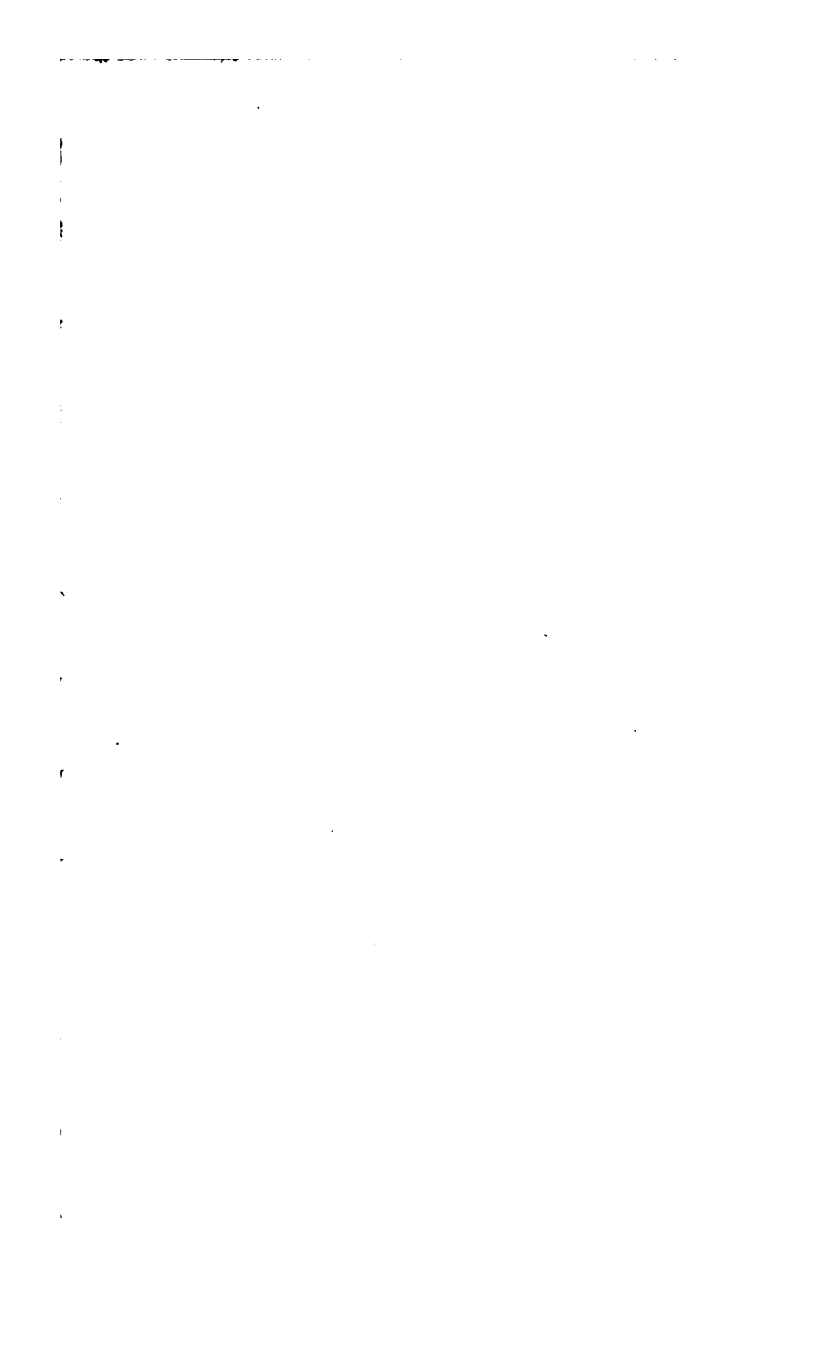
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